Things New and Old,

A

MONTHLY MAGAZINE

FOR THE LAMBS AND SHEEP OF THE FLOCK OF CHRIST.

"Feed the flock of God."—1 Peter v. 2.

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Things New and Old.

THE MANNA DESPISED.

(Numbers xi.)

"AND when the people complained, it displeased the Lord: and the Lord heard it; and his anger was kindled; and the fire of the Lord burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp. And the people cried unto Moses; and when Moses prayed unto the Lord, the fire was quenched. And he called the name of the place Taberah; because the fire of the Lord burnt among them. And the mixed multitude that was among them fell a lusting; and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers and the melons, the leeks and the onions and the garlic. But now our soul is dried away; there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes."

Here the poor human heart lets itself thoroughly out. Its tastes and its tendencies are made manifest. The people sigh after the land of Egypt, and cast back wistful looks after its fruits and its fleshpots. They do not say aught about the lash of the taskmaster and the toil of the brickkilns. There is total silence as to these things. Nothing is remembered now, save those resources by which Egypt had ministered to the lusts of nature.

How often is this the case with us! When once the

heart loses its freshness in the divine life—when heavenly things begin to lose their savour—when first love declines —when Christ ceases to be a satisfying and altogether precious portion for the soul—when the word of God and prayer lose their charm, and become heavy, dull, and mechanical; then the eye wanders back toward the world, the heart follows the eye, and the feet follow the heart. We forget, at such moments, what the world was to us when we were in it, and of it. We forget what toil and slavery, what misery and degradation we found in the service of sin and of Satan, and think only of the gratification and ease, the freedom from those painful exercises, conflicts, and anxieties which attend upon the wilderness path of God's people.

All this is most sad, and should lead the soul into the most profound self-judgment. It is terrible when those who have set out to follow the Lord begin to grow weary of the way and of God's provision. How dreadful must those words have sounded in the ear of Jehovah, "But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes." Ah, Israel, what more didst thou need? Was not that heavenly food enough for thee? Couldst thou not live upon that which the hand of thy God had provided for thee?

Do we count ourselves free to ask such questions? Do we always find *our* heavenly manna sufficient for us? What means the frequent inquiry raised by professing Christians as to the right or wrong of such and such worldly pursuits and pleasures? Have we not even heard from the lips of persons making the very highest profession, such words as these, "How are we to fill up the day? We cannot be always thinking about Christ and heavenly things, we must have a little recreation." Is not this somewhat akin to Israel's language in Numbers xi.? Yes truly; and as is the language, so is the acting. We prove, alas! that Christ is not enough for the heart by the pal-

pable fact of our betaking ourselves to other things. How often, for example, does the Bible lie neglected for hours, while the light and worthless literature of the world is greedily devoured. What mean the well-thumbed newspaper and the almost dust-covered Bible? Do not these things tell a tale? Is not this despising the manna, and sighing after, nay devouring, the leeks and onions?

We specially call the attention of young Christians to that which is now before us. We are deeply impressed with a sense of their danger of falling into the very sin of Israel, as recorded in our chapter. No doubt we are all in danger; but the young amongst us are peculiarly so. Those of us who are advanced in life are not so likely to be drawn away by the frivolous pursuits of the world—by its concerts, its flower-shows, its pleasure-parties, its vain songs and light literature. But the young *will* have a dash of the world. They long to taste it for themselves. They do not find Christ an all-sufficient portion for the heart, they want recreation.

Alas! alas! what a thought! How sad to hear a Christian say, "I want some recreation. How can I fill up the day? I cannot be always thinking of Jesus." We should like to ask all who speak thus, How will you fill up eternity? Shall not Christ be sufficient to fill up its countless ages? Shall you want recreation there? Will you sigh for light literature, vain songs, and frivolous pursuits there?

It will, perhaps, be said, "We shall be different then." In what respect? We have the divine nature—we have the Holy Ghost—we have Christ for our portion—we belong to heaven—we are brought to God. "But we have an evil nature in us." Well, are we to cater for that? Is it for that we crave recreation? Must we try to help our wretched flesh, our corrupt nature, to fill up the day? Nay we are called to deny it, to mortify, to reckon it dead. This is christian recreation. This is the mode in which

the saint is called to fill up his day. How is it possible for us to grow in the divine life, if we are only making provision for the flesh? Egypt's food cannot nourish the new nature; and the great question for us is this, Which do we really mean to nourish and cherish—the new or the old? It must be obvious that the divine nature cannot possibly feed upon newspapers, vain songs, and light literature; and hence, if we give ourselves in any measure to these latter, our souls must wither and droop.

May we have grace to think of these things, to think seriously. May we so walk in the Spirit that Christ may ever be a satisfying portion for our hearts. Had Israel in the wilderness walked with God, they never could have said, "Our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes." That manna would have been quite enough for them. And so with us. If we really walk with God in this wilderness world, our souls shall be satisfied with the portion that He gives, and that portion is a heavenly Christ. Can He ever fail to satisfy? Does He not satisfy the heart of God? Does He not fill all heaven with His glory? Is He not the theme of angels' song, and the object of their adoring homage and wondering worship? Is He not the one grand subject of everlasting counsels and purposes? Doth not the history of His ways overlap eternity?

What answer have we to give to all these queries? What but a hearty, unreserved, unhesitating YES? Well, then, is not this blessed One, in the deep mystery of His Person, in the moral glory of His ways, in the brightness and blessedness of His character—is not He enough for our hearts? Do we want aught beside? Must we get the newspaper or some light magazine to fill up the vacuum in our souls? Must we turn from Christ to a flower-show or a concert?

Alas, that we should have to write thus! It is most sad; but it is most needful, and we here put this question most

pointedly to the reader: Dost thou really find Christ insufficient to satisfy thy heart? Hast thou cravings which He does not fully meet? If so, thou art in a very alarming condition of soul, and it behoves thee to look at once, and to look closely, into this solemn matter. Get down on thy face before God in honest self-judgment. Pour out thy heart to Him. Tell Him all. Own to Him how thou hast fallen and wandered—as surely thou must have done when God's Christ is not enough for thee. Have it all out in secret with thy God, and take no rest until thou art fully and blessedly restored to communion with Himself—to heart fellowship with Him about the Son of His love.

A WORD TO THE EVANGELIST.

We trust it may not be deemed out of place if, at the commencement of a new year, we venture to offer a word of counsel and encouragement to all who have been and are engaged in the blessed work of preaching *the gospel of the grace of God.** We are, in some measure, aware of the difficulties and discouragements which attend upon the path of every evangelist, whatever may be his sphere of labour or measure of gift; and it is our heart's desire to hold up the hands and cheer the hearts of all who may be in danger of falling under the depressing power of these things. We increasingly feel the immense importance of an earnest, fervent gospel testimony everywhere; and we dread exceedingly any falling off therein. We are imperatively called

* We sometimes hear persons speak of "the gospel of the glory," as though it were something different from the gospel of *the grace* of God. We suppose they mean to give prominence to the great truth that Christ is in the glory. But surely we must never forget that the One who is in the glory was nailed to the cross and buried in the grave. This was what Paul preached. 1 Cor. xv. 1—4.

to "do the work of an evangelist," and not to be moved from that work by any arguments or considerations whatsoever.

Let none imagine that, in writing thus, we mean to detract, in the smallest degree, from the value of teaching, lecturing, or exhortation. Nothing is further from our thoughts. "These things ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone." We mean not to compare the work of the evangelist with that of the teacher, or to exalt the former at the expense of the latter. Each has its own proper place, its own distinctive interest and importance.

But is there not a danger, on the other hand, of the evangelist abandoning his own precious work in order to give himself to the work of teaching and lecturing? Is there not a danger of the evangelist's becoming merged in the teacher? We fear there is; and it is under the influence of this very fear that we pen these few lines. We observe, with deep concern, some who were once known amongst us as earnest and eminently successful evangelists, now almost wholly abandoning their work and becoming teachers and lecturers.

This is most deplorable. *We really want evangelists.* A true evangelist is almost as great a rarity as a true pastor. Alas! alas! how rare are both! The two are closely connected. The evangelist gathers the sheep; the pastor feeds and cares for them. The work of each lies very near the heart of Christ—the Divine Evangelist and Pastor; but it is with the former we have now more immediately to do—to encourage him in his work, and to warn him against the temptation to turn aside from it, We cannot afford to lose a single ambassador just now, or to have a single preacher silent. We are perfectly aware of the fact that there is in some quarters a strong tendency to throw cold water upon the work of evangelization. There is a sad lack of sympathy with the preacher of the gospel; and, as a necessary consequence, of active co-operation with him in his

work. Further, there is a mode of speaking of gospel preaching which argues but little sympathy with the heart of Him who wept over impenitent sinners, and who could say, at the very opening of His blessed ministry, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me *to preach the gospel to the poor.*" (Isaiah lxi.; Luke iv.) And again, "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth." Mark i. 38.

Our blessed Lord was an indefatigable preacher of the gospel, and all who are filled with His mind and spirit will take a lively interest in the work of all those who are seeking in their feeble measure to do the same. This interest will be evinced, not only by earnest prayer for the divine blessing upon the work, but also by diligent and persevering efforts to get immortal souls under the sound of the gospel.

This is the way to help the evangelist, and this way lies open to every member of the Church of God—man, woman, or child. All can thus help forward the glorious work of evangelization. If each member of the assembly were to work diligently and prayerfully in this way, how different would it be with the Lord's dear servants who are seeking to make known the unsearchable riches of Christ.

But, alas! how often is it otherwise. How often do we hear even those who are of some repute for intelligence and spirituality, when referring to meetings for gospel testimony, say, "Oh! I am not going there; it is *only* the gospel." Think of that! "*Only the gospel.*" If they would put the idea into other words, they might say, "It is *only* the heart of God—*only* the precious blood of Christ—*only* the glorious record of the Holy Ghost."

This would be putting the thing plainly. Nothing is more sad than to hear professing Christians speak in this way. It proves too clearly that their souls are very far away from the heart of Jesus. We have invariably found that those who think and speak slightingly of the work of the

evangelist are persons of very little spirituality; and on the other hand, the most devoted, the most true hearted, the best taught saints of God are always sure to take a profound interest in that work. How could it be otherwise? Doth not the voice of holy scripture bear the clearest testimony to the fact of the interest of the Trinity in the work of the gospel? Most assuredly it does. Who first preached the gospel? Who was the first herald of salvation? Who first announced the good news of the bruised seed of the woman? The Lord God Himself, in the garden of Eden. This is a telling fact in connection with our theme. And further, let us ask, who was the most earnest, laborious and faithful preacher that ever trod this earth? The Son of God. And who has been preaching the gospel for the last eighteen centuries? The Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.

Thus then we have the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost all actually engaged in the work of evangelization; and if this be so, who are we to dare to speak slightingly of such a work? Nay, rather may our whole moral being be stirred by the power of the Spirit of God so that we may be able to add our fervent and deep amen to those precious words of inspiration, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" Isaiah liii. 7; Rom, x. 15.

But it may be that these lines shall be scanned by some one who has been engaged in the work of preaching the gospel, and is beginning to feel rather discouraged. It may be he has been called to preach in the same place for years, and he feels burdened by the thought of having to address the same audience, on the same subject, week after week, month after month, year after year. He may feel at a loss for something new, something fresh, some variety. He may sigh for some new sphere, where the subjects which are familiar to him will be new to the people. Or, if this cannot be, he may feel led to substitute lectures and expo-

sitions for the fervid, pointed, earnest preaching of the gospel.

If we have in any measure set forth the reader's feelings on this subject, we think it will greatly help him in his work to bear in mind that the one grand theme of the true evangelist is Christ. The power to handle that theme is the Holy Ghost. The one to whom that theme is to be unfolded is the poor lost sinner. Now, Christ is ever new; the power of the Holy Ghost is ever fresh; the soul's condition and destiny ever intensely interesting. Furthermore, it is well for the evangelist to bear in mind, on every fresh occasion of rising to preach, that his unconverted hearers are totally ignorant of the gospel, and hence he should preach as though it were the first time they had ever heard the message, and the first time he had ever delivered it. For, be it remembered, the preaching of the gospel, in the divine acceptation of the phrase, is not a mere barren statement of evangelical doctrine—a certain form of words enunciated over and over again in wearisome routine. Far, very far from it. The gospel is really the large loving heart of God welling up and flowing forth toward the poor lost sinner in streams of life and salvation. It is the presentation of the atoning death and glorious resurrection of the Son of God; and all this in the present energy, glow, and freshness of the Holy Ghost, from the exhaustless mine of holy scripture. Moreover, *the* one absorbing object of the preacher is to win souls for Christ, to the glory of God. For this he labours and pleads; for this he prays, weeps, and agonizes; for this he thunders, appeals, and grapples with the heart and conscience of his hearer. His object is not to teach doctrines, though doctrines may be taught; his object is not to expound scripture, though scripture may be expounded. These things lie within the range of the teacher or lecturer; but let it never be forgotten, the preacher's object is to bring the Saviour and the sinner together—to win souls to Christ. May God by His Spirit

keep these things ever before our hearts, so that we may have a deeper interest in the glorious work of evangelization!

We would, in conclusion, merely add a word of exhortation in reference to the Lord's day evening. We would, in all affection, say to our beloved and honoured fellow labourers, seek to give that one hour to the great business of the soul's salvation. There are 168 hours in the week, and surely it is the least we may devote one of these to this momentous work. It so happens that during that interesting hour we can get the ear of our fellow-sinner. Oh! let us use it to pour in the sweet story of God's free love and of Christ's full salvation.

"Call them in"—the poor, the wretched,
Sin-stained wanderers from the fold;
Peace and pardon freely offer;
Can you weigh their worth with gold?
"Call them in"—the weak, the weary,
Laden with the doom of sin;
Bid them come and rest in Jesus;
He is waiting—"call them in."

"Call them in"—the Jew, the Gentile;
Bid the stranger to the feast:
"Call them in"—the rich, the noble,
From the highest to the least.
Forth the Father runs to meet them,
He hath all their sorrows seen;
Robe, and ring, and royal sandals
Wait the lost ones—"call them in."

"Call them in"—the broken-hearted,
Cowering 'neath the brand of shame;
Speak love's message low and tender,
'Twas for sinners Jesus came.
See, the shadows lengthen round us,
Soon the day-dawn will begin;
Can you leave them lost and lonely?
Christ is coming—"call them in."

SHORT PAPERS ON CHURCH HISTORY;

ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE SEVEN CHURCHES.

(Rev. ii., iii.)

INTRODUCTION.

RATHER more than three years ago, two papers appeared in this Magazine, under the title of "Philadelphia." These were afterwards published separately as a little book, with a few foot notes from church history. The re-appearance of these papers, in their new form, first suggested the thought of the proposed forthcoming papers under the above title.

Many of our readers, we know, have neither the time nor the opportunity for reading the voluminous works that have been written from time to time on the history of the Church. Still, that which has been the dwelling place of God for the last eighteen hundred years, must be a subject of the deepest interest to all His children. We speak not now of the Church as it is often represented in history, but as it is spoken of in scripture. There it is seen in its true spiritual character, as the body of Christ, and as the "habitation of God through the Spirit." Eph. ii.

We must always bear in mind, when reading what is called a history of the Church, that from the days of the apostles until now, there have been two distinct, and widely different, classes of persons in the professing church: the merely nominal, and the real—the true, and the false. This was predicted. "For I know this," says the apostle, "that after my departure shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." (Acts xx.) His second epistle to Timothy is also full of warnings and directions as to the various forms of evil which were then but too plainly mani-

fest. A rapid change for the worse had taken place from the time that his first epistle was written. He exhorts the truly godly to walk in separation from those who had a form of godliness, but who denied the power thereof. "From such," he says, "turn away." Such exhortations are always needed, always applicable—as much now as then. We cannot separate ourselves from Christendom, without giving up Christianity; but we can and ought to separate ourselves from what the apostle calls "vessels to dishonour." The promise is, that "if a man purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work."

It is interesting—though painfully so—to mark the difference on this point between the first and the second epistles to Timothy. In the first, the Church is spoken of according to its true character and blessed position on the earth. There it is seen as the house of God—the depositary and display of truth to man. In the second epistle, it is spoken of as what it had become through the failure of those into whose hands it had been entrusted.

Take one passage from each epistle in illustration. 1. "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly. But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest *to behave thyself in the house of God, the pillar and ground of the truth.* (1 Tim. iii. 14, 15.) 2. "But in *a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth;* and some to honour, and some to dishonour." Here all is changed—sadly changed. In place of divine order, there is hopeless confusion; in place of "*the* house of God, the pillar and ground of truth," there is "*a* great house"—practically, "the mystery of iniquity." In place of the house being kept according to the will of God and suitable for Him, it was arranged and ordered according to the will of man, and for his own personal advantage and exaltation. Thus

early had the evils, which have been the sin and the disgrace of Christendom ever since, made their appearance. But this was overruled for good. The Spirit of God, in great mercy, has supplied us with the plainest directions for the darkest day of the Church's history, and has pointed out the way of truth for the worst of times; so that we are left without excuse. Times and circumstances change, not the truth of God.

THE MISTAKES OF HISTORIANS IN GENERAL.

Some historians, it is sorrowful to say, have not taken into account this sad mixture of evil vessels with the good —of true Christians and false. They have not themselves been spiritually minded men. Hence they have rather made it their chief object to record the many unchristian and wicked ways of mere professors. They have dwelt at great length, and with great minuteness, on the heresies that have troubled the Church—on the abuses that have disgraced it, and on the controversies that have distracted it. Much rather would we endeavour to trace, all down through the long dark page of history, *the silver line of God's grace in true Christians.*

God has never left Himself without a witness. He has had His loved and cherished, though hidden, ones, in all ages and in all places. No eye but His could see the seven thousand in Israel who had not bowed the knee to the image of Baal, in the days of Ahab and Jezebel. And tens of thousands, we doubt not, even from the darkest ages of Christianity, will be found at last in the "glorious church," which Christ will present to Himself, on the long looked for day of His nuptial glory. Many precious stones from the rubbish of the "middle ages" will reflect His grace and glory on that crowning day. Blessed thought! even now it fills the soul with ecstasy and delight. Lord, hasten that happy day, for thine own name's sake!

The truly godly are instinctively humble. They are generally retiring, and for the most part but little known. There is no humility so deep and real as that which the knowledge of grace produces. Such lowly and hidden ones find but a small place on the historic page. But the insinuating, zealous, heretic, and the noisy, visionary, fanatic, are too clamorous to escape notice. Hence it is, that the historian has so carefully recorded the foolish principles and the evil practices of such men.

We will now turn for a little, and take a general view of the first part of our subject, namely,

THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA.

These seven epistles, so far, will guide our future studies. We believe they are not only *historical*, but also *prophetical*. Doubtless they are *strictly* historical, and this fact must be allowed its full weight in studying their prophetic character. Seven churches actually existed in the seven cities here named, and in the condition here described. But it is equally clear, that they were intended, by Him who knows the end from the beginning, to bear a prophetic meaning, as well as an historical application. They were selected from amongst many, and so arranged and described, as to foreshadow what was to come. To limit their application to the seven literal churches then in Asia, would be to mar the unity of the Apocalypse, and to lose the promised blessing. "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy." The character of the whole book is prophetic and symbolic. The second and third chapters are no exception to this. They are introduced by the Lord Himself in their mystic character. "The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches."

The number *seven* is characteristic. It marks a complete circle of the thoughts or ways of God as to time. Hence the seven days of the week—the seven feasts of Israel—the seven parables of the kingdom of heaven in mystery. It is often used throughout this book, which takes up both Jew, Gentile, and the Church of God, as responsible on the earth. Hence we have seven churches, seven stars, seven candlesticks, seven angels, seven seals, seven trumpets, seven vials, and seven last plagues. In chapters ii. and iii. only the Church is seen as responsible on the earth, and the object of divine government. From the fourth chapter to the nineteenth she is seen in heaven. Then she appears in full manifested glory with her Lord. "And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean."

In the body of the book, especially from the sixth chapter, the Jews and Gentiles come before us, and are judicially dealt with from the throne of God in heaven. But this will not take place till after the Church—the true bride of the Lamb—is caught up to heaven, and the merely nominal, corrupt thing finally rejected.

The threefold division of the book, as given by the Lord Himself, makes the order of events quite plain, and ought to have immense weight as a principle of interpretation in the study of the Apocalypse. In chapter i. 19, He gives us the contents and plan of the whole book: "Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter,"—or, literally, "*after these things.*" "The things which thou hast seen" refer to the revelation of Jesus as seen by John in chapter i. "The things which are"—to the time-condition of the professing body as presented in chapters ii. and iii. "The things which shall be hereafter" from the fourth chapter to the end. The third division begins with chapter iv. A door is opened in heaven, and the apostle is called to come

up. "Come up hither and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter," or "*after these things*." It is the same word in chapter iv. 1, as in chapter i. 19. The things which are, and the things which shall be *after these things*, cannot possibly be concurrent. The one must end before the other begins.

When the number seven is used, not in a literal, but in a symbolic sense, it always signifies completeness. It is evidently thus used in chapters ii. and iii. There were other churches, we know, besides those named, but seven are selected and associated, to present a complete picture of what would afterwards be developed in the Church's history on earth. The more important moral elements which then existed, the Lord foresaw would re-appear in course of time. Thus we have a seven-fold, or divinely perfect picture of the successive states of the professing Church, during the entire period of her responsibility on the earth.

We will now take a rapid glance at the outline of the seven churches; and give a general idea of the different periods in history to which they apply.

EPHESUS.—In Ephesus, the Lord detects the root of all declension. "Thou hast left thy first love." But though true of the apostolic age, it was also solemnly prophetic of the ages following. It is threatened with the removal of the candlestick unless there be repentance. Period—from the apostolic age to the close of the second century.

SMYRNA.—The message to Ephesus is general, to Smyrna it is specific. And though it applied at that time to the assembly there, it shadowed forth in the most striking way, the repeated persecutions through which the Church passed under the heathen emperors. Yet God may have used the power of the world to arrest the progress of evil in the Church. Period—from the second century to Constantine.

PERGAMOS.—Here we have the establishment of Christianity by Constantine as the religion of the State. Instead of

persecuting the Christians, he patronized them. From that moment the downward course of the Church is rapid. Her unholy alliance with the world proved her saddest and deepest fall. Period—from the beginning of the fourth to the seventh century, when popery was established.*

THYATIRA. — In Thyatira, we have the popery of the middle ages. Jezebel-like, practising all kinds of wickedness, and persecuting the saints of God, under the disguise of religious zeal. Nevertheless there was a God-fearing remnant in Thyatira, whom the Lord comforts with the bright hope of His coming, and with the promise of power over the nations, when He Himself shall reign. But the word of exhortation is "That which ye have already, *hold fast till I come.*" Period—from the establishment of popery to the Lord's coming. It goes on to the end, but is characterized by the dark ages.

SARDIS.—Here we see the protestant part of Christendom—that which followed the great work of the Reformation. The foul features of popery disappear, but the new system itself has no vitality. "Thou hast a name that thou livest and art dead." But there are true saints in these lifeless systems, and Christ knows them all. "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy." Period—from the eventful sixteenth century onwards. Protestantism after the Reformation.

PHILADELPHIA.—The Church of Philadelphia presents a feeble remnant, but they are faithful to the *word* and *name* of the Lord Jesus. They shadow forth the *out-calling* of God in these last days. That out of which they are called

* The title "Pope" was first adopted by Hyginus in 139; and Pope Boniface III. induced Phocas, Emperor of the East, to confine it to the prelates of Rome in 606. By the connivance of Phocas also, the Pope's supremacy over the christian Church was established.—*Haydn's Dict. of Dates.*

becomes Laodicean in character. Christ is in their midst as the Holy One and the True, and is represented as having charge of the house. He has "the key of David." The treasures of the prophetic word are unlocked for those inside. They are also in the sympathies of His patience, and in the expectation of His coming. "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." Period—since the Reformation; but more especially from the beginning of this century, and still more in the present day. Activity on all hands is rapidly developing the last phases of Christendom.

LAODICEA.—In Laodicea, we have lukewarmness—indifference—latitudinarianism; but with high pretensions, a boastful spirit, and great self-sufficiency. This is the last state of that which bears the name of Christ on the earth. But, alas, it is intolerable to Him. Its final doom has come. Having separated every true believer from the corruptions of Christendom to Himself, He spues it out of His mouth. That which ought to have been sweet to His taste, has become nauseous, and it is cast off for ever. Period—co-existing with Philadelphia and Sardis, but especially the closing scene.

Having thus taken a general view of the seven churches, we would now endeavour, through the Lord's help, briefly to trace these different periods of the Church's history. And we purpose examining more fully, each of the seven epistles as we go along, that we may ascertain what light is shed on the different periods by these addresses; and how far the facts of church history illustrate the scripture history of these two chapters. May the Lord guide, for the refreshment and blessing of His own beloved ones.

TRIUMPHS OF GRACE IN THE CROSS.

NEVER had man's hatred to God been displayed as it was in the death of Christ. When indignation is aroused by some exciting tale of man's cruelty or injustice towards his fellow-man, you will hear people exclaim with astonishment at the divine long-suffering—amazed that God should bear with a world where such deeds are enacted! Bear with it! Once God looked down from heaven to witness the murder of His well-beloved Son! The very mercy He had shewn to others, was used by the rabble as a taunt against Himself. "He saved others," they said, "himself he cannot save." Such was the scene on which God once looked down. And what ensued? The instant destruction of the murderers, and of the world they represented? No; it was on the cross that man's *fullest* enmity was met by the outflow of God's *fullest* love. The blood shed by man's wicked hands was accepted as the atonement for human guilt; and the proclamation was issued, that whosoever of all man's guilty race should confide in that precious blood, should receive forgiveness of sins, and association in life, blessedness, and glory with the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. What language can set forth the grace which is here displayed? The ministry of reconciliation to a world guilty of the murder of God's well-beloved Son is surely the expression of transcendent, sovereign grace. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself;" and when that world had met His overtures of peace by the murder of His incarnate Son, instead of taking immediate vengeance He sends a new embassy, who exclaim, "Now, then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." Nor is this a mere continuance or repetition of the overtures made previous to Christ's death. The proclamation of pardon is now based on that fact. Men's wicked hands were, indeed, the instrument of Christ's

death; but what the gospel proclaims is God's part in that wondrous transaction: "For he [God] hath made him [Christ] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Well indeed may it be said, "Where sin abounded grace did much more abound."

So, dear reader, you cast your soul on Christ, believing the record which God has given of His Son, you will find that every foe has been encountered and overcome by Him, and that you have but to share with Him the spoils of the victory won by His arm alone. Is it the law you fear? "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." Is it wrath you dread—God's wrath on account of sin? Christ has endured it in our stead. "Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves," was His language on the cross. Is it sin that oppresses you? "Now once, in the end of the world, hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Does death make you afraid? He died, "that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage." Is it God's holiness that penetrates you with alarm? It is God Himself to whom the atoning work of Christ was presented; and so satisfied is He with that precious sacrifice, that He has raised Jesus from the dead, and placed Him at His own right hand. It is God Himself who proclaims to you the virtue of Christ's all-cleansing blood, declaring that "by him all that believe are justified from all things." "It is God that justifieth." Is it the yoke of sin by which you are galled? "Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under law, but under grace." So complete is Christ's victory, and so blessed its results to the sinner that believes in Jesus, that, like the apostle he may say, "If God be for us who can be against us?" Life, righteousness, sonship; the Spirit itself, as seal, unction, earnest; and full

participation with Christ in all the blessedness and glory to which, as the risen man, he has been exalted, are among the treasures with which those are enriched who receive God's testimony to Him.

W. T.

GOD'S TAKING.

O THOU! who never takest from thy beloved,
Except to give them more,
When most is gone from our sweet earthly good,
Then most thou hast in store.

We are too blind with tears, dear Lord, to count
Thy garnered treasure true;
Our weary hearts are all too weak to mount
To such a heavenly view.

Our eyes rest on the empty places here—
We stand by open tombs—
And gathering round our footsteps year by year,
Are ever deepening glooms.

But thou canst raise the weariest eye to thee—
Ease the most troubled heart—
Teach the most faithless and perverse to see,
By thy divinest art.

How true thy reckoning is—"a little while,"
"These light afflictions" borne—
And then—the hidden rapture of thy smile
In heaven's celestial morn!

The open treasure-house, our own domain,
Rich in all goodly store;
All sad hours turned to joy—all loss to gain,
And rest for evermore.

No aching heart nor empty arms again,
For through these passing hours,
Safe in thy home and free from every stain
Are thy beloved, and ours.

E. A. K.

CORRESPONDENCE.

1. "C. B.," Great Grimsby. A prophet, in the sense of 1 Corinthians xiv. is one who gives you the mind of God on any subject, or who brings your conscience into the light of God's presence. We most surely believe that, in this sense of the term, there are prophets in the Church of God.

2. "A. O. M.," Trincomalee. We thank you, most heartily, for your kind and interesting letter; but we must beg of you to excuse our unwillingness to enter upon your question. We deem it our duty, before God, to confine ourselves, in the conducting of this Magazine, to matters bearing directly upon the salvation of perishing souls, or the edification of God's dear people. And, judging from the excellent spirit and tone of your letter, we feel assured, dear friend, that you fully sympathize with us in this matter. Controversy may have its place and its value; but we are convinced it is not our line of things. May the Lord greatly bless you!

3. "E. K.," Wallingford. We believe that in Rom. vii. the apostle gives us the exercise of a quickened soul not knowing deliverance. It is, to use a figure, a man who has got out of a morass describing his feelings when he was in it. Do you think Paul was a "wretched man" crying out for deliverance, when he penned his epistle to the Romans? Most certainly not. He was a happy man rejoicing in full deliverance. But he is describing the exercises of a quickened soul still under the law, and having no power against sin. This is not proper christian experience. Can a Christian *never* do right? *Must* he always do wrong? Can a Christian say, "How to perform that which is good, I find not?" The fact is, in all this part of the chapter, you do not get the Holy Ghost in His indwelling power. There is new life: but there is no power—no sense of full deliverance—no consciousness of victory. All this you have in chapter viii. which is proper christian experience. But our space forbids our going further into this profoundly interesting, though sadly misunderstood, passage of scripture. We believe that many of God's beloved people have never got out of Romans vii.; and while we must admit that we should much prefer being honestly in chapter vii. to being falsely in chapter viii., yet we do not and cannot admit that chapter vii. is the proper place for one who ought to know

the enfranchizing power of these words, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." It is *very* good for the soul to pass through Romans vii.; but it is not for the glory of God that he should stay there. If it is right for all to remain in chapter vii., then for what end did the Holy Ghost pen chapter viii?

4. "J. B.," Melbourne. Your letter is most encouraging. Accept our warmest thanks. Such communications are eminently calculated to stir us up to all diligence in the preparation of our little serial. You ask for an explanation of Mark ix. 49. It is difficult to handle this great practical passage in our brief space. "Every one shall be salted with *fire*." This refers to the judgment of man as a sinner. "Every sacrifice shall be salted with *salt*." This refers to the testing, soul-subduing exercise through which every saint must pass. "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." This is the salting with *fire*. "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged"—"Let a man examine himself"—"Mortify your members"—"I keep under my body." These and such like passages, together with the chastening, discipline, and governmental dealings of God our Father, present, as we judge, the salting with salt. If we have escaped the judgment of fire through the death of Christ, we ought to seek to be an acceptable "sacrifice" to God, and in order to this there must be the "salt," that great preservative from corruption. "Let your conversation be always with grace seasoned with salt."

5. "R. T. A.," Cork. Acts xii. 3 may at least teach us how little the Jews entered into the true meaning of the feast of unleavened bread, when they could take pleasure in the cruel actings of the ungodly Herod. Romans i. 17 should be read, "Therein is the righteousness of God, on the principle of faith, revealed to faith." Verse 18 simply refers to persons professing the truth but living in practical unrighteousness. Alas! no uncommon case.

6. "S. H.," Blackheath. Ask your friend to read the paper on Hebrews vi. 1—10 in our fourth volume, page 25.

7. "A Sunday School Teacher." We can only praise the Lord, with a full heart, for your letter. May He be pleased to crown your interesting labours, yet more abundantly, with His blessing. We rejoice in the growing interest of the Lord's people in the blessed work of Sunday school teaching. Be assured it is a good work, and one which will be rewarded in the day of Christ. As to your

question, we are of opinion that it is the sweet privilege even of babes in Christ to be at the table of their Lord. It is not a question of age, but of spiritual life. Cannot the Holy Ghost give understanding to a child of eleven or fourteen years of age? Where is there any authority in scripture for excluding believing children from the Lord's table? No doubt it is well for children to know and consider what they are doing in coming to the Lord's table, and to take the step in faith and with an exercised conscience. But the same holds good in reference to adults. There may be circumstances in any given case calling for special vigilance and caution; but the Lord's table is spread upon such a basis as to embrace every member of the body of Christ.

8. "A. E.," Ealing. 1 Corinthians v. 5 does not apply to your case at all. It is the case of one who had not judged his thoughts or judged himself, and therefore the assembly was called to judge him. We trust you seek grace to judge your thoughts. There is a vast difference between treating such thoughts as vile intruders, and providing them with furnished lodgings. Philippians iv. 8, 9 is a fine antidote against evil thoughts.

Communications have come to hand from "E. C.," London. "A. R. B.," Islington. "A. Z.," London. "T. S.," Crewe. "G. F. H.," Faversham. "B. A.," Mile-end. "A Constant Reader," Brighton. "W. M.," Dumfries. "W. K.," Belfast. "F. J. K.," Stratford-on-Avon. "F. G. S.," Brixton Road. "T. W.," Bristol. "M. D." Weston-super-Mare. "J. C.," near Stonehouse. "T. W. B." "Enquirer," Bradford. "E. S.," Ramsgate. "B. B. B," Barnstaple. "G. H.," Ramsgate. "X. T. M." Brixham.

A SUGGESTION.

DEAR READER,—In many parts of the earth there are those who would be thankful to have the tract you hold in your hand, and others of a similar nature, after you have done with them.

Will you send me any old numbers that are lying idle, and I will forward them to the proper quarters, and if possible tell you from time to time how your labour of love is progressing. W. R. H.

15, Barrett's Grove, Stoke Newington, N.,
London.

THE NAZARITE.

(Numbers vi.)

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When either man or woman shall separate themselves to vow a vow of a Nazarite, to separate themselves unto the Lord: he shall separate himself from wine and strong drink, and shall drink no vinegar of wine, or vinegar of strong drink, neither shall he drink any liquor of grapes, nor eat moist grapes, or dried. All the days of his separation shall he eat nothing that is made of the vine tree, from the kernel even to the husk. All the days of the vow of his separation there shall no razor come upon his head: until the days be fulfilled, in the which he separateth himself unto the Lord, he shall be holy, and shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow. All the days that he separateth himself unto the Lord he shall come at no dead body. He shall not make himself unclean for his father, or for his mother, for his brother, or for his sister, when they die; because the consecration of his God is upon his head. All the days of his separation he is holy unto the Lord." Ver. 1—8.

The ordinance of Nazariteship is full of interest and practical instruction. In it we see the case of one setting himself apart, in a very special manner, from things which, though not absolutely sinful in themselves, were, nevertheless, calculated to interfere with that intense consecration of heart which is set forth in true Nazariteship.

In the first place, the Nazarite was not to drink wine. The fruit of the vine, in every shape and form, was to him a forbidden thing. Now wine, as we know, is the apt symbol of earthly joy—the expression of that social enjoyment which the human heart is so fully capable of entering into. From this the Nazarite was sedulously to keep himself. With him it was a literal thing. He was not to

excite nature by the use of strong drink. All the days of his separation he was called to exercise the strictest abstinence from wine.

Such was the type, and it is written for our learning—written, too, in this marvellous book of Numbers, so rich in its wilderness lessons. This is only what we might expect. The impressive institution of the Nazarite finds its appropriate place in the book of Numbers. It is in perfect keeping with the character of the book, which, as has been already remarked, contains all that specially belongs to life in the wilderness.

Let us, then, enquire into the nature of the lesson taught us in the Nazarite's abstinence from everything of the vine, from the kernel even to the husk.

There has been but one true and perfect Nazarite in this world—but one who maintained, from first to last, the most complete separation from all mere earthly joy. From the moment He entered upon His public work, He kept Himself apart from all that was of this world. His heart was fixed upon God and His work, with a devotion that nothing could shake. No claims of earth or nature were allowed, for a single moment, to come in between His heart and that work which He came to do. "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" And again, "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" With such words did the true Nazarite seek to adjust the claims of nature. He had one thing to do, and to that He separated Himself perfectly. His eye was single and His heart undivided. This is apparent from first to last. He could say to His disciples "I have meat to eat that ye know not of;" and when they, not knowing the deep significance of His words, said, "Hath any man brought him aught to eat?" He replied, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and finish his work." (John iv.) So also, at the close of His course here below, we hear Him giving utterance to such words as these, as He took into His hand the paschal cup, "Take

this, and divide it among yourselves; for I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come." Luke xxii. 17, 18.

Thus we see how the perfect Nazarite carried Himself throughout. He could have no joy in the earth, no joy in the nation of Israel. The time had not come for that, and therefore He detached Himself from all that which mere human affection might find in association with His own, in order to devote Himself to the one grand object which was ever before His mind. The time will come when He, as the Messiah, will rejoice in His people and in the earth; but, until that blissful moment arrives, He is apart as the true Nazarite, and His people are linked with Him. "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth." John xvii. 16—19.

Christian reader, let us deeply ponder this first grand feature of the Nazarite character. It is important we should faithfully examine ourselves in the light of it. It is a very grave question indeed, how far we, as Christians, are really entering into the meaning and power of this intense separation from all the excitement of nature, and from all merely earthly joy. It may perhaps be said, "What harm is there in having a little amusement or recreation? Surely we are not called upon to be monks. Has not God given us richly all things to enjoy? And while we are in this world, is it not right we should enjoy it?"

To all this we reply, It is not a question of the harm of this, that, or the other. There was no harm, as a general rule, in wine, nothing abstractedly wrong in the vine tree. But the point is this, if any one aimed at being a Nazarite, if he aspired to this holy separation unto the Lord, then was he to abstain *wholly* from the use of wine and strong drink.

Others might drink wine; but the Nazarite was not to touch it.

Now, the question for us is this, do we aim at being Nazarites? Do we sigh after thorough separation and devotement of ourselves, in body, soul, and spirit, unto God? If so, we must be apart from all those things in which mere nature finds its enjoyment. It is upon this one hinge that the whole question turns. The question, most assuredly, is not "Are we to be monks?" but "Do we want to be Nazarites?" Is it our heart's desire to be apart, with our Lord Christ, from all mere earthly joy—to be separated unto God from those things which, though not absolutely sinful in themselves, do, nevertheless, tend to hinder that entire consecration which is the true secret of all spiritual Nazariteship? Is not the christian reader aware that there are, in very deed, many such things? Is he not conscious that there are numberless and nameless things which exert a distracting and weakening influence upon his spirit, and yet were they tried by the standard of ordinary morality, they might be allowed to pass as harmless?

But we must remember that God's Nazarites do not measure things by any such standard. Theirs is not an ordinary morality at all. They look at things from a divine and heavenly stand-point, and hence they cannot suffer aught to pass as harmless which tends, in any wise, to interfere with that high tone of consecration to God after which their souls are fervently breathing.

May we have grace to ponder these things, and to watch against every defiling influence. Each one must be aware of what it is which, in his case, would prove to be wine and strong drink. It may seem to be a trifle; but we may rest assured that nothing is a trifle which breaks the current of our soul's communion with God, and robs us of that holy intimacy which it is our privilege ever to enjoy.

(To be continued, if the Lord will.)

THE WORK OF AN EVANGELIST.

(Acts xvi. 13—34.)

In our January issue, we ventured to offer a word to the evangelist, which we now follow up with a paper on the evangelist's work; and we cannot do better than select, as the basis of our remarks, a page from the missionary record of one of the greatest evangelists that ever lived. The passage of scripture which stands at the head of this article furnishes specimens of three distinct classes of hearers, and also the method in which they were met by the great apostle of the Gentiles, guided, most surely, by the Holy Ghost. We have, first, *the earnest seeker;* secondly, *the false professor;* and, thirdly, *the hardened sinner.* These three classes are to be met everywhere, and at all times, by the Lord's workmen; and hence we may be thankful for an inspired account of the right mode of dealing with such. It is most desirable that those who go forth with the gospel should have skill in dealing with the various conditions of soul that come before them, from day to day; and there can be no more effectual way of attaining this skill than the careful study of the models given us by God the Holy Ghost.

Let us then, in the first place, look at the narrative of

THE EARNEST SEEKER.

The laborious apostle, in the course of his missionary journeyings, came to Troas, and there a vision appeared to him in the night, "There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia and help us. And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them. Therefore loosing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to

Neapolis; and from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days. And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us; whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things that were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there. And she constrained us." Acts xvi. 9—15.

Here, then, we have a touching picture—something well worth gazing at and pondering. It is a picture of one who, having through grace gotten a measure of light, was living up to it, and was earnestly seeking for more. Lydia, the seller of purple, belonged to the same interesting generation as the eunuch of Ethiopia, and the centurion of Cæsarea. All three appear on the page of inspiration as quickened souls not emancipated—not at rest—not satisfied. The eunuch had gone from Ethiopia to Jerusalem in search of something on which to rest his anxious soul. He had left that city still unsatisfied, and was devoutly and earnestly hanging over the precious page of inspiration. The eye of God was upon him, and He sent His servant Philip with the very message that was needed to solve his difficulties, answer his questions, and set his soul at rest. God knows how to bring the Philips and the eunuchs together. He knows how to prepare the heart for the message and the message for the heart. The eunuch was a worshipper of God; but Philip is sent to teach him how to see God in the face of Jesus Christ. This was precisely what he wanted. It was a flood of fresh light breaking in upon his earnest spirit, setting his heart and conscience at rest, and sending him on his way rejoicing.

He had honestly followed the light as it broke in upon his soul, and God sent him more.

Thus it is ever. "To him that hath shall more be given." There never was a soul who sincerely acted up to his light that did not get more light. This is most consolatory and encouraging to all anxious enquirers. If the reader belongs to this class, let him take courage. If he is one of those with whom God has begun to work, then let him rest assured of this, that He who hath begun a good work will perform the same until the day of Jesus Christ. He will, most surely, perfect that which concerneth His people.

But let no one fold his arms, settle upon his oars, and coolly say, "I must wait God's time for more light. I can do nothing—my efforts are useless. When God's time comes I shall be all right; till then, I must remain as I am." These were not the thoughts or the feelings of the Ethiopian eunuch. He was one of the earnest seekers; and all earnest seekers are sure to become happy finders. It must be so, for "God is a rewarder of them that *diligently* seek him." Heb. xi. 6.

So also with the centurion of Cæsarea. He was a man of the same stamp. He lived up to his light. He fasted, he prayed, and gave alms. We are not told whether he had read the sermon on the mount; but it is remarkable that he exercised himself in the three grand branches of practical righteousness set forth by our Lord in the sixth chapter of Matthew.* He was moulding his conduct and

* The reader will notice that in Matthew vi. 1, the marginal reading is the correct one: "Take heed that ye do not your *righteousness* before men, to be seen of them." Then we have the three departments of this righteousness, namely, almsgiving (ver. 2); prayer (ver. 3); fasting. (ver. 16.) These were the very things that Cornelius was doing. In short, he feared God, and was working righteousness, according to his measure of light.

shaping his way according to the standard which God had set before him. His righteousness exceeded the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, and therefore he entered the kingdom. He was, through grace, a real man, earnestly following the light as it streamed in upon his soul, and he was led into the full blaze of the gospel of the grace of God. God sent a Peter to Cornelius, as He had sent a Philip to the eunuch. The prayers and alms had gone up as a memorial before God, and Peter was sent with a message of full salvation through a crucified and risen Saviour.

Now it is quite possible that there are, at this moment, thousands of persons throughout Christendom, who, having been rocked in the cradle of easy-going evangelical profession, and trained up in the flippant formalism of a self-indulgent, heaven-made-easy religion, are ready to condemn the pious conduct of Cornelius, and to pronounce it the fruit of ignorance and legality. Such persons have never known what it was to deny themselves a single meal, or to spend an hour in real, earnest prayer, or to open their hand, in true benevolence, to meet the wants of the poor. They have heard and learnt, perchance, that salvation is not to be gained by such means—that we are justified by faith without works—that it is to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly.

All this is most true; but what right have we to imagine that Cornelius was praying, fasting, and giving alms in order to earn salvation? None whatever—at least if we are to be governed by the inspired narrative, and we have no other means of knowing aught about this truly excellent and interesting character. He was informed by the angel that his prayers and his alms had gone up as a memorial before God. Is not this a clear proof that these prayers and alms were not the trappings of self-righteousness, but the fruits of a righteousness based on the knowledge which he had of God? Surely the fruits of self-righteousness and

legality could never have ascended as a memorial to the throne of God; nor could Peter ever have said concerning a mere legalist that he was one who feared God and worked righteousness.

Ah! no, reader; Cornelius was a man thoroughly in earnest. He lived up to what he knew, and he would have been quite wrong to go further. To him the salvation of his immortal soul, the service of God, and eternity, were grand and all-absorbing realities. He was none of your easy-going professors, full of flippant, vapid, worthless talk, but *doing* nothing. He belonged to another generation altogether. He belonged to the *working*, not the *talking* class. He was one on whom the eye of God rested with complacency, and in whom the mind of heaven was profoundly interested.

And so was our friend of Thyatira, Lydia, the seller of purple. She belonged to the same school—she occupied the same platform as the centurion and the eunuch. It is truly delightful to contemplate these three precious souls—to think of one in Ethiopia; another at Cæsarea; and a third at Thyatira or Philippi. It is particularly refreshing to contrast such downright, thorough-going, earnest souls with many, in this our day of boasted light and knowledge, who have got the plan of salvation, as it is termed, in their heads, the doctrine of grace on the tongue; but the world in the heart; whose one absorbing object, from morning till night, is self, self, self,—miserable object!

We shall have occasion to refer more fully to these latter under our second head; but, for the present, we shall think of the earnest Lydia; and we must confess it is a far more grateful exercise. It is very plain that Lydia, like Cornelius and the eunuch, was a quickened soul; she was a worshipper of God; she was one who was right glad to lay aside her purple-selling, and betake herself to a prayer meeting, or to any suchlike place where spiritual profit was to be had, and where there were good things going.

"Birds of a feather flock together," and so Lydia soon found out where a few pious souls, a few kindred spirits, were in the habit of meeting to wait on God in prayer.

All this is lovely. It does the heart good to be brought in contact with this deep-toned earnestness. Surely the Holy Ghost has penned this narrative, like all holy scripture, for our learning. It is a specimen case, and we do well to ponder it. Lydia was found diligently availing herself of any and every opportunity; indeed she exhibited the real fruits of divine life, the genuine instincts of the new nature. She found out where saints met for prayer, and took her place among them. She did not fold her arms, and settle down on her lees, to wait, in antinomian indolence and culpable idleness, for some extraordinary undefinable thing to come upon her, or some mysterious change to come over her. No; she went to a prayer meeting—the place of expressed need—the place of expected blessing: and there God met her, as He is sure to meet all who frequent such scenes in Lydia's spirit. God never fails an expectant heart. He has said, "They shall not be ashamed that wait for me;" and, like a bright and blessed sunbeam, on the page of inspiration, shines that pregnant, weighty, soul-stirring sentence, "God is a rewarder of them that DILIGENTLY seek him." He sent a Philip to the eunuch in the desert of Gaza. He sent a Peter to the Centurion, in the town of Cæsarea. He sent a Paul to the seller of purple, in the suburbs of Philippi; and He will send a message to the reader of these lines, if he be a really earnest seeker after God's salvation.

(To be continued, if the Lord will.)

"SEEK ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him: and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Is. lv. 6, 7.

SHORT PAPERS ON CHURCH HISTORY;

ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE SEVEN CHURCHES.

(Rev. ii., iii.)

Chapter I.

In commencing the study of any subject, it is well to know its beginnings—the original intention or plan, and the first step in its history. These we have in the clearest, fullest way, as to the Church, in holy scripture. There we have not only the original intention, but the plans and specifications of the Great Builder, and the early history of the work under His own hand. "And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved." (Acts ii.) This is historical. The foundation had been laid, and the work was going on; but the Lord Himself was still the only builder; therefore up to this time. all was real and perfect.

At the close of the Jewish dispensation the Lord added the saved remnant of Israel to the newly formed Church: but at the close of the present or christian dispensation, He will take all who believe in His name up to heaven in glorified bodies. Not one belonging to the Church will be added to the congregation of millennial saints. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thess. iv. 14—18.) This will be the happy close of the history of the Church on earth—the true spouse of Christ. The dead raised—the living changed, and all, in their bodies of glory, caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Thus we have the entire limits of the Church defined, and the whole period of

her history before us. But we return to the dawn of her day on the earth.

Under the figure of a building, the Lord first introduces the subject of the Church. And so infinitely precious are His words, that we may adopt them as the text or motto of its whole history. They have sustained the hearts and the hopes of His people in all ages, and in all circumstances; and they will ever be the stronghold of faith. What can be more blessed, more assuring, more peace-giving, than these words?—

"UPON THIS ROCK I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH; AND THE GATES OF HELL SHALL NOT PREVAIL AGAINST IT."

In Matthew xvi. the Lord questions His disciples as to the sayings of men concerning Himself. This leads to the glorious confession of Peter, and also to the gracious revelation of the Lord concerning His Church. It may be well to transfer the whole conversation to our pages. It all bears so directly on our subject.

"When Jesus came into the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias: and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.* And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but *my Father which is in heaven.* And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Here we have the two main things connected with the proposed building—the Rock-foundation, and the divine Builder. "Upon this *rock I* will build my church." But

who is, or *what* is, "this rock?" some may enquire. Clearly, we answer, the *confession* of Peter; not Peter himself, as the apostasy teaches. True, he was a stone—a living stone in the new temple; "Thou art Peter"—thou art a stone. But the Father's revelation, by Peter, of the glory of the Person of His Son, is the foundation on which the Church is built—"*Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.*" But the glory of the Person of the Son in *resurrection* is the unveiled truth here. "Flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Immediately on the confession by Peter, the Lord intimates His intention to build His Church, and asserts its eternal security. "*Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*"

He Himself, the fountain of life, could not be conquered by death, but in dying as the great substitute for sinners, He triumphed over death and the grave, and is alive for evermore, as He said to His apostle John after His resurrection: "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." (Rev. i. 18.) What majestic, what triumphant words are these! They are the words of a conqueror—of one who has power; but of power over the gates of hades—the place of separate spirits. The keys—symbol of authority and power—hang at His girdle. The *stroke* of death may fall upon a Christian, but the *sting* is gone. It comes as a messenger of peace to conduct the weary pilgrim home to eternal rest. Death is no longer the *master*, but the *servant* of the Christian. "For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or *death*, or things present, or things to come; all are yours: and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." 1 Corinthians iii. 21—23.

The Person of Christ, then, the Son of the living God—in His resurrection glory, is the foundation—the solid, the imperishable foundation, on which the Church is built.

As alive from the dead, He communicates life in resurrection to all who are built on Him as the true foundation stone. This is plain from what Peter says in his first epistle. "To whom coming, as unto a living stone .... ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house." And further down in the same chapter he says, "Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious," or "an honour." (See marg.) May both reader and writer note well these two most precious truths in connection with our "Rock-foundation"—divine life and divine preciousness. These are communicated to, and become the possession of, all who put their trust in Christ. "To *whom* coming," not to *what* coming; it is the *Person* of Christ we come to, and have to do with. His life—life in resurrection—becomes ours. From that moment He is our life. "To whom coming, as unto a living stone ..... ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house." Christ's own life, as the risen Man, and all that He is heir to, is ours. Oh! wondrous, marvellous, blessed truth! Who would not desire, above all things, this life, and this life beyond the power of death—the gates of hades? Eternal victory is stamped on the risen life of Christ, it can never more be tested, and this is the believer's life.

But there is more than *life* for every living stone in this spiritual temple. There is also Christ's *preciousness*. "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious;" literally, "the preciousness." That is, just as the life of Christ becomes ours when we believe in Him, so does His preciousness. The principle in both is the same. The life may be viewed as our capacity to enjoy; and the preciousness, as our title to possess our inheritance on high. His honours, titles, dignities, privileges, possessions, glories, are ours—all ours in Him. "To them that believe he is the *preciousness*." O wondrous thought! "He loved the Church and gave himself for it." Such then is our Rock-foundation, and such the blessedness of all who are on the Rock. Like Jacob of old, when a

pilgrim and a stranger he rested on the stone in the desert, the whole panorama of heaven's riches in grace and glory passed before him. Gen. xxviii.

CHRIST THE ONLY BUILDER OF HIS CHURCH.

But Christ is also *the builder* of His Church. "Upon this rock *I will build my Church.*" It is well to be clear on this point, so that we may not confound what *man* builds with what Christ builds. There must be the greatest confusion of mind, both as to the truth of God and the present state of Christendom, unless this distinction is seen. Nothing is more important to note here than that Christ is the *only builder* of His Church; though Paul and Apollos, and all true evangelists, are *ministers*, by whom sinners believe. The Lord's work in the souls of believers is perfect. It is a real, spiritual, personal work. Through His grace in their hearts they come to Himself, as unto a living stone, and are built upon Him who is risen from among the dead. They have tasted that the Lord is gracious. Such are the living stones with which Christ builds His holy temple; and the gates of hell can never prevail against it. Thus Peter himself, and all the apostles, and all true believers, are built up a spiritual house. When Peter speaks of this building in his first epistle, he says nothing of himself as a builder. None but Christ has anything to say to this building. It is His work and His *only*. "*I* will build my Church," He says.

Let us now see from the word of God what man builds—what materials he uses, and the way he goes to work. In 1 Corinthians iii. and 2 Timothy ii. we have these things brought before us. "A great house" is raised by human instrumentality: but which, in a certain sense, is also the Church, and the house of God. As in 1 Timothy iii. 16 we read of "the house of God, which is the Church of the living God." It is also spoken of as Christ's house in Hebrew iii., "whose house are we." But the house soon

became sadly corrupted through human infirmity and positive wickedness. The authority of God's word by many was set aside, and man's will became supreme. The effect of human philosophy on the simple institutions of Christ was soon painfully manifest. But wood, hay, and stubble, can never be "fitly framed together" with gold, silver, and precious stones. The house became great in the world; like the mustard tree, in the branches of which many find a convenient lodging. Connection with the "great house" gives man a status in the world, in place of being like the *Master*, despised and rejected. The archbishop stands next to royalty. But the professing Church is not only outwardly great, it is most pretentious, and seeks to put the stamp of God on its own unhallowed work. This is its greatest wickedness, and the source of its blindness, confusion, and worldliness.

Paul, as one chosen of the Lord to do His work, laid the foundation of "God's building" in Corinth, and others built upon it. But they did not all build with divine materials. The right foundation was laid, and every man was to take heed how he builded thereon. In connection with the true foundation, some might build gold, silver, and precious stones, and others wood, hay, and stubble. That is, some might teach sound doctrine, and look for living faith in all who applied for communion: others might teach unsound doctrine, and receive into the fellowship of the Church, persons in whom was no faith—the mere outward observance of ordinances taking the place of faith and eternal life. Here man's instrumentality, responsibility, and failure came in. Nevertheless, the builder himself may be saved, having faith in Christ, though his work is destroyed. But there is another and a worse class of builders, who corrupt the temple of the Lord, and are themselves destroyed. We give, for the convenience of the reader, the entire passage. Nothing can be plainer. "According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as

a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.....If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." Verses 10—17.

We may further observe on the Lord's words, "upon this rock I will build my Church," that He had not begun to build it yet, He is telling them what He is going to do. He does not say, I *have* built it, or I *am* building it, but I *will* build it; and this He began to do at Pentecost.

But there is another truth most intimately connected with the history of the Church, and linked up with its condition and character, on the earth, that we must notice, before proceeding with its actual history. We refer to the truth contained in the expression,

THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

This leads to the "great house"—already referred to —of outward profession. At the same time, we must bear in mind, that though intimately connected, the kingdom of heaven and the great house are quite distinct. In title, the world belongs to the King. "The field is the world." His servants are to go on sowing. In result, we have "a great house," or Christendom. But when all that which is merely nominal in Christendom shall be swept away by judgment, the kingdom will be established in power and glory. This will be the millennium.

While still speaking to Peter about the Church, the Lord

added "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." The Church, as built by Christ, and the kingdom of heaven as opened by Peter, are widely different things. It is one of the great but common mistakes of Christendom, to use the terms *interchangeably*, as if they meant the same thing. And theological writers in all ages, from assuming, as a basis, that they are the same, have written in the most confused way, both as to the Church and the kingdom. The expression is *dispensational*, just as the similar phrase, "the kingdom of God," is *moral*. But unless we have some acquaintance with the dispensational ways of God, we can never rightly divide His word. That which Christ Himself builds, and that which man builds *instrumentally*, by means, it may be, of preaching and baptizing, must not be confounded. The Church which is Christ's body is built upon the confession that He is the Son of the living God, glorified in resurrection. Every truly converted soul has to do with Christ Himself, before it can have anything to say to the Church. The kingdom is a wider thing, and takes in every baptized person—the whole scene of Christian profession, whether true or false.

Christ does not say to Peter that He will give him *the keys of the Church*, or *the keys of heaven*. Had He done so, there might have been some show of reason for the evil system of popery. But He merely says, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven"—or of the new dispensation. Keys, we know, are not for building temples, but for opening doors; and the Lord honoured Peter to open the door of the kingdom, first to the Jews, and then to the Gentiles. (Acts ii. x.) But the language of Christ about His Church is of another order. It is simple, beautiful, emphatic, and unmistakable. "My Church." What depth, what fulness there is in these words: "My Church!" When the heart is in fellowship with Christ about His Church, there will be an appre-

hension of His affections towards it, which we have no power of expressing. As it is, we love to linger over these two words, "My Church!" but who can speak of the measure of Christ's heart that is therein revealed? Again, think of these other two words, "This rock." As if He had said, "The glory of my Person, and the power of my life in resurrection, form the solid foundation of "My Church." And again, "I will build." Thus we see in these seven words, that everything is in Christ's own hands, as "to the Church which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."

THE OPENING OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

The *administration* of the Kingdom, the Lord, in an especial manner, committed to Peter, as we see in the early chapters of the Acts. The term is taken from the Old Testament. See Daniel ii. and vii. In chapter ii. we have the kingdom; in chapter vii. we have the king. The phrase, *Kingdom of Heaven, occurs only in the gospel* of Matthew, where the evangelist writes chiefly for Israel.

The bringing in of *the kingdom of heaven in* power and glory on the earth, in the Person of the Messiah, was the natural expectation of every godly Jew. John the Baptist, as the Lord's forerunner, came preaching, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. But in place of the Jews receiving their Messiah, they rejected and crucified Him; consequently, the kingdom, according to Jewish expectations, was set aside. Nevertheless, it was introduced in another form. When the rejected Messiah ascended to heaven, and took His place *at God's right hand, triumphant over every foe, the kingdom* of heaven began. Now the king is in heaven, and as Daniel says, "the heavens do rule," though not openly. And from the time that He ascended until He returns, it is the kingdom in *mystery*. (Matt. xiii.) When He comes back again in power and great glory it will be the kingdom in *manifestation*.

"THAT DEAR LOVE OF THINE."

"It passeth *knowledge!* that dear love of thine,
My Jesus! Saviour! yet this soul of mine
Would of that love, in all its depth and length,
Its height and breadth and everlasting strength,
Know more and more.

It passeth *telling!* that dear love of thine,
My Jesus! Saviour! yet these lips of mine
Would fain proclaim to sinners far and near
A love which can remove all guilty fear—
And love beget.

It passeth *praises!* that dear love of thine,
My Jesus! Saviour! yet this heart of mine
Would sing a love so rich—so full—so free—
Which brought an undone sinner, such as me
Right home to God.

But, ah! I cannot tell, or sing, or know,
The fulness of that love, whilst here below:
Yet my poor vessel I may freely bring!
Oh! thou who art of love the living spring,
My vessel fill.

I *am* an empty vessel! scarce one thought
Or look of love to thee I've ever brought:
Yet, I *may* come, and come again to thee
With this—the contrite sinner's truthful plea—
'Thou lovest me!'

Oh! *fill* me, Jesus! Saviour, with thy love!
May woes but drive me to the fount above:
Thither may I in childlike faith draw nigh,
And never to another fountain fly,
But unto thee!

And when, my Jesus! thy dear face I see—
When at thy lofty throne I bend the knee,
Then of thy love—in all its breadth and length,
Its height and depth and everlasting strength—
My soul shall sing, and find her endless rest
In loving thee!"

A SUDDEN CHANGE.

(Luke xvi.)

How sudden!—in one moment the scene changes. Now clothed in purple and fine linen, and faring sumptuously every day: but death comes—and what then? In a moment the whole scene is changed. From royal robes and kingly fare to the depths of misery in hell, where worlds could not purchase one drop of cold water. "The rich man died and was buried." His funeral may have been as stately as his life; but, "in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments." Long before the pompous ceremony was over his eyes were opened to his awful state. What a change for him! But alas! alas! it is his last change! He is fixed now for eternity, and he knows it. His eyes are opened. They were willingly closed against the truth in time, but he can close them no more for ever.

Unbelief may now dream about the punishment of the wicked not being eternal, but the false dreams of time will have no place in the lake of fire. "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" is the bitter wail of the hypocrites, or false professors in Zion. (Isa. xxxiii. 14.) They own it as now their *dwelling* place; the bitter wail can fall on no ear of mercy now—can bring no hand to help—yet in hopeless agony they still cry, "who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" Oh! that awful word—that heart-rending thought—"*dwell with everlasting burnings.*" Better far be as a poor Lazarus with faith in Christ, than a rich man without it, though possessed of all the wealth of this world.

What a change to Lazarus, and how sudden! Near the rich man's gate he used to be laid, full of sores. What a contrast! The one faring sumptuously, and attired in purple and fine linen; but alas, without God—he lived for

himself. The other, a poor beggar—loathsome, in poverty, in suffering, friendless. But he believed God and lived for Him. A change comes, and suddenly the beggar dies. Nothing is said about his funeral, perhaps he had next to none. But, he "was carried by the angels unto Abraham's bosom." The once rich, but now poor, man sees him. What a sight! Oh! can it be?—shall the lost ones see the saved? Parable though it be, it is not intended to mislead. All is perfectly plain. "And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off and Lazarus in his bosom".....Reader—O reader—which will be thy place—thy future—thy eternity? Let Christ be thy happy choice *now*—thy loved portion—thy rest—thy confidence. He died for sinners such as the rich man and Lazarus—such as thee and me—but only they who put their trust in Him are saved. *Blessed*, BLESSED, BLESSED, are all they that put their trust in Him!

NOTE.—There is a very solemn and striking contrast between the close of Luke xv. and xvi. In the former, our Lord draws aside the curtain, and shews us the interior of the Father's house: and there we see a returned prodigal at the father's table, feeding on the fruits of a father's love. In the latter, our Lord draws aside the curtain and shews us the interior of hell; and there we see a soul tormented in the flames. Awful contrast! And how very near they are to each other on the inspired page! It is just the same in Revelation xx. and xxi. The former closes with "the lake of fire." The latter opens with "the holy city." What a contrast! And how very near they are to each other on the inspired page! Reader, which is to be your portion?

O haste! O haste! make no delay,
At once to Jesus come;
Remember now's the accepted day,
O enter while there's room.

CORRESPONDENCE.

9. "An Afflicted Sister." May the good Lord hear and answer your cry! Your case has deeply affected us. Do not be discouraged. Persevere in prayer. Wait on the living God. May He comfort and sustain your heart!

10. "C. W.," Willesborough. We can only say, as to your difficulty in reference to Mark x. 29, 30, that we have never met any true Christian who could not readily say that he had received a hundredfold for all he had ever given up for Christ. If one could not say so, it is plain that Christ is not the object before the heart.

11. "E. S.," Ireland. We are deeply interested in your case, though we cannot enter upon your question here. In point of fact, there is no weight in the question whatever; but we must keep this magazine free from all such matters. We should be glad to hear from you again, with your full address. Meanwhile, seek to follow the light as it streams in upon your soul.

12. "Two Constant Readers." You will find a paper on the subject to which you refer, in volume viii., page 209. The writer of this interesting article purposes, if the Lord will, to go more fully into the subject of the seven churches in a series of papers in our volume for '69.

13. "An Anxious Inquirer," London. If you feel liberty before the Lord, continue to act as you have done; but see that you do not go against conscience, or grieve the Spirit of God.

14. "Juvenis," London. We do not feel free to offer any counsel in your case. You must wait only upon God. Each one must learn, for himself, in communion with God, his proper path in this solemn matter. We have invariably found that those who were most forward in offering counsel were the most incompetent to give it; and, on the other hand, those whose counsel would be worth having were slowest to give it. Do not suppose, dear friend, that we do not sympathize with you in your exercise; we do most deeply. But we believe you must ask counsel of God. 1 Corinthians vii. 32—34 teaches, most certainly, that the unmarried are the most free from care; but verse 7 as distinctly teaches that "every man hath his own proper gift of God;" and each one must know, for himself, what his proper gift is. It is one thing to say, "Follow Paul's example;" and quite another thing to have the "proper gift" to do it. It is a fatal mistake for any one to affect to walk in a path for which God has not given him a call, or

endued him with spiritual power. We must remember, in these days of ritualism and revived monasticism, that marriage is a holy and honourable institution, established by God, in the garden of Eden; sanctioned by His presence, in Cana of Galilee; and pronounced to be honourable in all, by His Spirit, in Hebrews xiii. 4. Thus much as to the general principle; but the moment you come to individual cases, each one must be guided of God. To Him we affectionately commend you.

15. "A Berean," London. We are not told in what particular way Satan hindered Paul's visiting the Thessalonians. (1 Thess. ii. 18.) He did hinder him, once and again. This is very solemn, and should lead all Christ's servants to great watchfulness and deep exercise of soul before God. Satan may use a thousand things to hinder. He has many *wiles*, though his *power* is broken for faith. Christ has destroyed the power of Satan, so that the saint need not fear him on that score. It is his wiles, his devices, his temptations, that we have ever to guard against. It is remarkable that in the tenth chapter of Daniel, Satan was permitted to hinder the angelic messenger, and to detain him for three weeks, when he would have brought a message to Daniel. May God keep us in the secret of His presence!

16. "J. L.," Fermanagh. Matthew xix. 30 teaches us a weighty and solemn truth. Many set out to follow the Lord, with loud profession and large promise; but they do not persevere to the end. They fall back and get into the hindmost rank. Others, on the contrary, who, at first, seem slow paced, get on, through grace, and, in the end, are found in the very foremost rank. Therefore let high professors and loud talkers beware. It generally happens that where there is most conscience, most sincerity, most reality, there is the least *apparent* progress. Did you ever compare Matthew xix. 30 with chapter xx. 16? In the former, we read, "Many that are first shall be last; and the last first." In the latter, we read, "So the last shall be first, and the first last." It is not of man nor according to his thinking; and therefore the first shall be last. It is of God, and according to His sovereign goodness; and therefore the last shall be first.

17. "Lydia," Lincolnshire. Thanks for your interesting letter, and the accompanying lines. Your suggestion as to the little book you name would, we doubt not, be attended to if sent to the publisher, whose address is on the cover.

THE NAZARITE.

(Part ii.)

But there was another thing which marked the Nazarite: he was not to shave his head. "All the days of the vow of his separation there shall no razor come upon his head: until the days be fulfilled in the which he separateth himself unto the Lord, he shall be holy, and shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow."

In 1 Corinthians xi. 14, we learn that it augurs a lack of dignity for a man to have long hair. "Doth not even nature itself teach you, that if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?" From this we learn that if we really desire to live a life of separation to God, we must be prepared to surrender our dignity in nature. This our Lord Jesus Christ did perfectly. He made Himself of no reputation. He surrendered His rights in everything. He could say, "I am a worm and no man." He emptied Himself thoroughly and took the very lowest place. He neglected Himself while He cared for others. In a word, His Nazariteship was perfect in this as in all besides.

Now here is just the very thing which we so little like to do. We naturally stand up for our dignity and seek to maintain our rights—it is deemed manly so to do. But the perfect Man never did so; and if we aim at being Nazarites we shall not do so either. We must surrender the dignities of nature, and forego the joys of earth, if we would tread a path of thorough separation to God in this world. By and by, both will be in place, but not now.

Here again, be it remarked, the question is not as to the right or the wrong of the case. As a general rule, it was right for a man to shave his locks; but it was not right, nay, it was altogether wrong, for a Nazarite to do so. This made all the difference. It was quite right for an ordinary

man to shave and drink wine; but the Nazarite was not an ordinary man; he was one set apart from all that was ordinary, to tread a path peculiar to himself; and to use a razor or taste wine would involve the entire surrender of that peculiar path. Hence if any enquire, "Is it not right to enjoy the pleasures of earth and maintain the dignities of nature?" We reply, "Quite right, if we are to walk as men; but wholly wrong, yea, absolutely fatal, if we want to walk as Nazarites."

This simplifies the matter amazingly. It answers a thousand questions and solves a thousand difficulties. It is of little use to split hairs about the harm of this or that particular thing. The question is, What is our real purpose and object? Do we merely want to get on as men, or do we long to live as true Nazarites? According to the language of 1 Corinthians iii. 3, to "walk as men" and to be "carnal" are synonymous. Does such language really govern us? Do we drink into the spirit and breathe the atmosphere of such a scripture? or are we ruled by the spirit and principles of a godless, Christless world? It is useless to spend our time arguing points which would never be raised at all if our souls were in the right temper and attitude. No doubt, it is perfectly right, perfectly natural, perfectly consistent, for the men of this world to enjoy all that it has to offer them, and to maintain their rights and their dignities to the very utmost of their power. It were childish to question this. But, on the other hand, what is right and natural and consistent for the men of this world, is wrong, unnatural, and inconsistent for God's Nazarites. Thus the matter stands, if we are to be governed by the simple truth of God. We learn from Numbers vi., that if a Nazarite drank wine or shaved his locks, he defiled the head of his consecration. Has this no voice, no lesson for us? Assuredly it has. It teaches us that if our souls desire to pursue a path of whole-hearted consecration to God, we must abstain from the joys of earth, and surrender the

dignities and rights of nature. It must be thus, seeing that God and the world, flesh and Spirit, do not and cannot coalesce. The time will come when it will be otherwise; but just now, all who *will* live to God and walk in the Spirit, must *live* apart from the world and mortify the flesh. May God in His great mercy enable us so to do!

One other feature of the Nazarite remains to be noticed: he was not to touch a dead body. "All the days that he separateth himself unto the Lord, he shall come at no dead body. He shall not make himself unclean for his father, or for his mother, for his brother, or for his sister, when they die; because the consecration of his God is upon his head."

Thus we see that whether it was drinking wine, shaving his locks, or touching a dead body, the effect was the same; any one of the three involved the defilement of the head of the Nazarite's consecration. Wherefore it is plain that it was as defiling to the Nazarite to drink wine, or to shave his head, as it was to touch a dead body. It is well to see this. We are prone to make distinctions which will not stand for a moment in the light of the divine presence. When once the consecration of God rested upon the head of any one, that great and important fact became the standard and touchstone of all morality. It placed the individual on entirely new and peculiar ground, and rendered it imperative upon him to look at everything from a new and peculiar standpoint. He was no longer to ask what became him as a man; but, what became him as a Nazarite. Hence, if his dearest friend lay dead by his side, he was not to touch him. He was called to keep himself apart from the defiling influence of death, and all because "the consecration of God was upon his head."

Now, in this entire subject of Nazariteship, it is needful for the reader to understand very distinctly that it is not, by any means, a question of the soul's salvation, of eternal life, or of the believer's perfect security in Christ. If this

be not clearly seen, it may lead the mind into perplexity and darkness. There are two grand links in Christianity which, though very intimately connected, are perfectly distinct, namely, the link of eternal life, and the link of personal communion. The former can never be snapped by anything; the latter can be snapped in a moment, by the weight of a feather. It is to the second of these that the doctrine of Nazariteship pertains.

We behold, in the person of the Nazarite, a type of one who sets out in some special path of devotedness or consecration to Christ. The power of continuance in this path consists in secret communion with God; so that if the communion be interrupted the power is gone. This renders the subject peculiarly solemn. There is the greatest possible danger of attempting to pursue the path in the absence of that which constitutes the source of its power. This is most disastrous, and demands the utmost vigilance. We have briefly glanced at the various things which tend to interrupt the Nazarite's communion; but it would be wholly impossible, by any words of ours, to set forth the moral effect of any attempt to keep up the appearance of Nazariteship where the inward reality is gone. It is dangerous in the extreme. It is infinitely better to confess our failure, and take our true place, than to keep up a false appearance. God will have reality; and we may rest assured that, sooner or later, our weakness and folly will be made manifest to all. It is very deplorable and very humbling when the "Nazarites that were purer than snow" become "blacker than a coal;" but it is far worse when those who have become thus black keep up the pretence of being white.

"'Tis the treasure I've found in His love
That has made me a pilgrim below:
And 'tis then, when I reach Him above,
As I'm known, all His fulness I'll know."

(To be concluded in the next, if the Lord will.)

THE WORK OF AN EVANGELIST.

(Part ii.)

It is ever a moment of deepest interest when a prepared soul is brought in contact with the full Gospel of the grace of God. It may be that that soul has been under deep and painful exercise for many a long day, seeking rest but finding none. The Lord has been working by His Spirit, and preparing the ground for the good seed. He has been

terrible unreality as to divine and eternal things. Men, women, and children are real enough at their money-making, their pursuits, and their pleasures; but oh! when the things of God, the things of the soul, the things of eternity, are in question, the aspect of people is that of a yawning indifference. But the moment is rapidly approaching—every beat of the pulse, every tick of the watch, brings us nearer to it—when the yawning indifference shall be exchanged for "weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth." If this were more deeply felt, we should have many more Lydias, many more of those prepared to lend an attentive ear to Paul's gospel.

What force and beauty in those words, "Whose heart the Lord opened, that *she attended* unto the things that were spoken of Paul." Lydia was not one of those who go to meetings to think of anything and everything but the things that are spoken by the Lord's messengers. She was not thinking of her purple, or of the prices, or the probable gains or losses. How many of those who fill our preaching rooms and lecture halls follow the example of Lydia? Alas! we fear but very few indeed. The business, the state of the markets, the state of the funds, money, pleasure, dress, folly—a thousand and one things are thought of, and dwelt upon, and attended to, so that the poor vagrant, volatile heart is at the ends of the earth instead of "*attending*" to the things that are spoken.

All this is very solemn, and very awful. It really ought to be looked into and thought of. People seem to forget the responsibility involved in hearing the gospel preached. They do not seem to be in the smallest degree impressed with the weighty fact that the Gospel never leaves any unconverted person where it finds him. He is either saved by receiving, or rendered more guilty by rejecting it. Hence it becomes a serious matter to hear the Gospel. People may attend gospel meetings as a matter of custom, as a religious service, or because they have nothing else to

do, and the time would hang heavy upon their hands; or they may go because they think that the mere act of going has a sort of merit attached to it. Thus thousands attend preachings at which Christ's servants, though not Pauls in gift, power, or intelligence, unfold the precious grace of God in sending His only begotten Son into the world to save us from everlasting torment and misery. The virtue and efficacy of the atoning death of the divine Saviour—the Lamb of God—the dread realities of eternity—the awful horrors of hell, and the unspeakable joys of heaven—all these weighty matters are handled, according to the measure of grace bestowed upon the Lord's messengers, and yet how little impression is produced! They "reason of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come," and yet how few are made even to "tremble!"

And why? Will any one presume to excuse himself for rejecting the gospel message on the ground of his inability to believe it? Will he appeal to the very case before us, and say, "The Lord opened her heart; and if He would only do the same for me, I, too, should attend; but until He does, I can do nothing." We reply, and that with deep seriousness, Such an argument will not avail thee in the day of judgment. Indeed we are most thoroughly convinced that thou wilt not dare to use it then. Thou art making a false use of Lydia's charming history. True it is, blessedly true, the Lord opened her heart; and He is ready to open thine also, if there were in thee but the hundredth part of Lydia's earnestness.

And dost thou not know full well, reader, that there are two sides to this great question, as there are to every question? It is all very well, and sounds very forcibly, for thee to say, "I can do nothing." But who told thee this? Where hast thou learnt it? We solemnly challenge thee, in the presence of God, Canst thou look up to Him and say, "I can do nothing—I am not responsible?" Say, is the salvation of thy never-dying soul just *the* one thing

in which thou canst do nothing? Thou canst do a lot of things in the service of the world, of self, and of Satan; but when it becomes a question of God, the soul, and eternity, you coolly say, "I can do nothing—I am not responsible."

Ah! it will never do. All this style of argument is the fruit of a one-sided theology. It is the result of the most pernicious reasoning of the human mind upon certain truths in scripture which are turned the wrong way and sadly misapplied. But it will not stand. This is what we urge upon the reader. It is of no possible use arguing in this way. The sinner is responsible; and all the theology, and all the reasoning, and all the fallacious though plausible objections that can be scraped together, can never do away with this weighty and most serious fact.

Hence, therefore, we call upon the reader to be, like Lydia, in earnest about his soul's salvation—to let every other question, every other point, every other subject, sink into utter insignificance in comparison with this one momentous question—the salvation of his precious soul. Then, he may depend upon it, the One who sent Philip to the eunuch, and sent Peter to the centurion, and sent Paul to Lydia, will send some messenger and some message to him, and will also open his heart to attend. Of this there cannot possibly be a doubt, inasmuch as scripture declares that "God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." All who perish, after having heard the message of salvation—the sweet story of God's free love, of a Saviour's death and resurrection—shall perish without a shadow of an excuse, shall descend into hell with their blood upon their own guilty heads. Their eyes shall then be open to see through all the flimsy arguments by which they have sought to prop themselves up in a false position, and lull themselves to sleep in sin and worldliness.

But let us dwell for a moment on "the things that were spoken of Paul." The Spirit of God hath not thought proper to give us even a brief outline of Paul's address at

the prayer meeting, We are therefore left to other passages of holy scripture to form an idea of what Lydia heard from his lips on that interesting occasion. Let us take, for example, that famous passage in which he reminds the Corinthians of the gospel which he had preached to them. "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also YE ARE SAVED, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." 1 Cor. xv. 1—4.

Now, we may safely conclude that the foregoing passage of scripture contains a compendium of the things that were spoken of Paul, at the prayer meeting at Philippi. The grand theme of Paul's preaching was Christ—Christ for the sinner—Christ for the saint—Christ for the conscience —Christ for the heart—Christ all, and in all. He never allowed himself to wander from this great centre, but made all his preachings and all his teachings circulate round it with admirable consistency. If he called on men, both Jews and Gentiles, to repent, the lever with which he worked was Christ. If he urged them to believe, the object which he held up for faith was Christ, on the authority of holy scripture. If he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, the One that gave cogency and moral power to his reasoning was Christ. In short, Christ was the very gist and marrow, the sum and substance, the foundation and top stone, of Paul's preaching and teaching.

But, for our present purpose, there are three grand subjects, found in Paul's preaching, to which we desire to call the reader's attention. These are, first, the grace of God; secondly, the Person and work of Christ; and thirdly,

the testimony of the Holy Ghost as given in the holy scriptures.

We do not attempt to go into these vast subjects here; we merely name them, and entreat the reader to ponder them, to muse over them, and seek to make them his own.

(1.) The grace of God—His free sovereign favour, is the source from whence salvation flows—salvation in all the length, breadth, height, and depth of that most precious word—salvation which stretches, like a golden chain, from the bosom of God, down to the very deepest depths of the sinner's guilty and ruined condition, and back again to the throne of God—meets all the sinner's necessities, overlaps the whole of the saint's history, and glorifies God in the highest possible manner.

(2.) Then, in the second place, the Person of Christ and His finished work are the *only* channel through which salvation can possibly flow to the lost and guilty sinner. It is not the church and her sacraments, religion and its rites and ceremonies, man or his doings in any shape or form. It is the death and resurrection of Christ. "He died for our sins, was buried, and rose again the third day." This was the gospel which Paul preached, by which the Corinthians were saved, and the apostle declares, with solemn emphasis, "If any man preach any other gospel, let him be accursed." Tremendous words for this our day!

(3.) But, thirdly, the authority on which we receive the salvation is the testimony of the Holy Ghost in scripture. It is "according to the scriptures." This is a most solid and comforting truth. It is not a question of feelings or experiences or evidences; it is a simple question of faith in God's word wrought in the heart by God's Spirit.

(To be continued, if the Lord will.)

THE SHEPHERD AND THE FOLD.

THERE is a fold where none can stray,
And pastures ever green,
Where sultry sun, or stormy day,
Or night is never seen.
Far up the everlasting hills,
In God's own light it lies,
His smile its vast dimension fills
With joy that never dies.

There is a Shepherd living there,
The first-born from the dead,
Who tends, with sweet unwearied care,
The flock for which He bled.
There the deep streams of joy that flow
Proceed from God's right hand;
He made them, and He bids them go
To feed that happy land.

There congregate the sons of light,
Fair as the morning sky,
And taste of infinite delight
Beneath their Saviour's eye.
Where'er He turns, they willing turn,
In unity they move,
Their seraph spirits nobly burn
In harmony of love.

There in the power of heavenly light
They gaze upon the throne,
And scan perfection's utmost height,
And know as they are known.
Their joy bursts forth in strains of love,
And clear symphonious song,
And all the azure heights above
The echoes roll along.

O may our faith take up that sound,
Though toiling here below;
'Midst trial may our joys abound,
And songs amid our woe;
Until we reach that happy shore,
And join to swell their strain,
And from our God go out no more,
And never weep again.

SHORT PAPERS ON CHURCH HISTORY;

ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE SEVEN CHURCHES.

(Rev. ii., iii.)

THE new economy, Peter was privileged to open both to Jew and Gentile. This he did in his address to the Jews, Acts ii., and in his address to the Gentiles, Acts x. But again we would draw attention to the fact, that the Church, or the assembly of God, and the kingdom of heaven, are not the same thing. Let us be clear, in starting, as to this fundamental point. The identifying the two things has produced great confusion of thought and may be viewed as the origin of puseyism, popery, and every human system in Christendom. The following remarks on "the tare field," from a recent publication, bear directly on this subject, though they refer to a later period than the early chapters of the Acts.*

THE PARABLE OF THE TARES.

"Matthew xiii. 24, 25. 'Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, *The kingdom of heaven* is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way'—exactly what is become of the profession of Christ. There are two things necessary for the inroad of evil among Christians. The first is the unwatchfulness of the Christians themselves. They get into a careless state, they sleep, and the enemy comes and sows tares. This began at an early epoch in Christendom. We find the germs even in the Acts of the Apostles, and still more so in the epistles. 1 Thessalonians is the first inspired epistle that the apostle Paul wrote; and the second was written shortly after. And yet he tells them that the mystery of iniquity was already at work; that there were

* Lectures on the Gospel of Matthew. By W. Kelly. London: G. Morrish.

other things to follow, such as the apostasy and the man of sin, and that when the lawlessness should be fully manifest (instead of working secretly), then the Lord would put an end to the lawless one and all concerned. The mystery of iniquity seems akin to the sowing of the tares spoken of here. Some time after, 'when the blade was sprung up and brought forth fruit'—when Christianity began to make rapid strides in the earth—'then appeared the tares also.' But it is evident the tares were sown almost immediately after the good seed. No matter what the work of God is, Satan is always close upon its heels. When man was made, he listened to the serpent, and fell. When God gave the law, it was broken even before it was committed into the hands of Israel. Such is always the history of human nature.

"So the mischief is done in the field, and never repaired. The tares are not for the present taken out of the field: there is no judgment of them. Does this mean that we are to have tares in the Church? If the kingdom of heaven meant the Church, there ought to be no discipline at all: you ought to allow uncleanness of flesh or spirit there. Here is the importance of seeing the distinction between the Church and the kingdom. The Lord forbids the tares to be taken out of the kingdom of heaven: 'Let both grow together until the harvest' (ver. 30), that is, till the Lord comes in judgment. Were the kingdom of heaven the same as the Church, it would, I repeat, amount to no less than this: that no evil, let it be ever so flagrant or plain, is to be put out of the Church till the day of judgment. We see, then, the importance of making these distinctions, which too many despise. They are all-important for truth and holiness. Nor is there a single word of God that we can do without.

"What then is the meaning of this parable? It has nothing to do with the question of church communion. It is the 'kingdom of heaven' that is spoken of—the scene of the confession of Christ, whether true or false. Thus

Greeks, Copts, Nestorians, Roman Catholics, as well as Protestants, are in the kingdom of heaven; not believers only, but also bad people professing the name of Christ. A man, who is not a Jew nor a Pagan, and who outwardly professes Christ's Name, is in the kingdom of heaven. He may be ever so immoral or heretical, but he is not to be put out of the kingdom of heaven. But would it be right to receive him at the table of the Lord? God forbid! If a person falling into open sin were in the Church, he ought to be put out of it; but you *ought not* to put him out of the kingdom of heaven. In fact this could only be done by taking away his life: for that is meant by the rooting up of the tares. And this is what worldly Christianity did fall into, in no very long space of time after the apostles were departed from the earth. Temporal punishments were brought in for discipline: laws were made for the purpose of handing over the refractory to the subservient civil power. If they did not honour the so-called Church they were not to be suffered to live. In this way, the very evil our Lord had been guarding the disciples against came to pass; and the emperor Constantine used the sword to repress ecclesiastical offenders. He and his successors introduced temporal punishments to deal with the tares, to try and root them up. Take the Church of Rome, where you have so thoroughly the confusion of the Church with the kingdom of heaven: they claim, if a man is a heretic, to hand him over to the courts of the world to be burnt, and they never confess or correct the wrong, because they pretend to be infallible. Supposing that their victims even were tares, this is to put them out of the kingdom. If you root a tare from the field, you kill it. There may be men outside profaning the name of God; but we must leave them for God to deal with.

"This does not destroy christian responsibility towards those who surround the Lord's table. You will find instructions as to all this in what is written about the

Church. 'The field is the world;' the Church only embraces those believed to be members of Christ's body. Take 1 Corinthians, where we have the Holy Ghost shewing the true nature of ecclesiastical discipline. Supposing there are professing Christians, guilty of any sin you please; such persons are not to be owned, while they are going on in that sin, as members of Christ's body. A real saint might fall into open sin, but the Church, knowing it, is bound to intervene for the purpose of expressing God's judgment about the sin. Were they deliberately to allow such an one to come to the Lord's table they would in effect make the Lord a party to that sin. The question is not whether the person be converted or not. If unconverted, men have no business in the Church; if converted, sin is not to be winked at. The guilty are not to be put out of the kingdom of heaven, they *are* to be put out of the Church. So that the teaching of the word of God is most plain as to both these truths. It is wrong to use worldly punishments to deal with a hypocrite, even when he is detected. I may seek the good of his soul, but this is no reason for punishing him thus. But if a Christian is guilty of sin, the Church, though called to be patient in judgment, is never to suffer it; but we are to leave guilty people, who are unconverted, to be judged by the Lord at His appearing.

"This is the teaching of the parable of the tares; and it gives a very solemn view of Christianity. As sure as the Son of man sowed good seed, His enemy would sow bad, which would spring up along with the rest; and this evil cannot for the present be got rid of. There is a remedy for evil which enters the Church, but not yet for evil in the world."

It is perfectly clear, both from scripture and history, that the great mistake into which the professing body fell was the confounding of these two things—tares with wheat; or, those who were admitted by the administration of baptism

to all the official and temporal privileges of the professing Church, with those who were truly converted and taught of God. But the vast difference between what we may call the *sacramental* and the *vital* systems, must be clearly understood and carefully distinguished, if we would study church history aright.

Another mistake, equally serious, followed as a consequence. The great, outward, professing body became, in the eyes and in the language of men—*the Church*. Godly men were drawn into this snare, so that the distinction between the Church and the kingdom was early lost sight of. All the most sacred places and privileges, in the professing body, were thus held in common by godly and ungodly men. The Reformation utterly failed to clear the Church of this sad mixture. It has been handed down to us in the Anglican, Lutheran, and Presbyterian systems, as the form of baptism and admission clearly shews. In our own day, the sacramental system prevails to an alarming extent; and is rapidly on the increase. The real and the formal, the living and the dead, are undistinguished in the various forms of Protestantism. But, alas! most solemn reflection! there are many in the professing Church—in the kingdom of heaven—who will never be in heaven itself. Here we find tares as well as wheat—evil servants as well as faithful ones, and foolish virgins as well as wise ones. Though all who have been baptized are reckoned in the kingdom of heaven; only those who are quickened and sealed with the Holy Ghost belong to the Church of God.

But there is another thing connected with the professing Church which demands a brief notice here. We refer to

THE DIVINE PRINCIPLE OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

Not only did the Lord give the keys to Peter that he might open the doors of the new dispensation, but He intrusted to him its *internal administration*. This principle is all-important in its bearing on the Church

of God. The words of the commission are these, "And whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." The question is, What do they mean? Clearly, we believe, authority and power from the Lord, to be exercised in and by the Church, but limited, in result, to this world. There is no thought in the Lord's words about the Church deciding anything as to *heaven*. This is the false interpretation, and the deceiving power of the apostasy. The Church on earth can have nothing to say, or do, with what is done in heaven as to binding or loosing. The sphere of its action is within its own limits, and when it so acts, according to the commission of Christ, it has the promise of ratification in heaven.

Neither is there any thought here, we may add, of the Church, or of any of its officials, coming in between the soul and God, as to eternal forgiveness or eternal judgment. This is the daring blasphemy of Rome. "Who can forgive sins but God only?" He reserves this power to Himself alone. Besides, the subjects of church government *are* pardoned, or, at least, are on that ground. "Do not ye judge them that are *within?*" It will only apply to them that are *within* the pale of the Church. "But them that are *without* God judgeth." Of every believer in the wide field of Christendom it is said, "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." (Heb. x.) Hence, the retaining or the remission of sins by the Church is only for the present time, and strictly *administrative* in its character. It is the divine principle of receiving persons into the assembly of God, on the ground of adequate testimony to their conversion, soundness in doctrine, and holiness of life; and also of putting away impenitent offenders until restored by true repentance.

But some of our readers may have the common impression, that this power was only given to Peter and the rest of the apostles, and consequently, ceased with them. This

is a mistake. True, it was given to Peter only in the first instance, as we have seen; and no doubt greater power was exercised during the days of the apostles than has been since; but not greater *authority*. The Church has the same *authority* now as then, as to discipline in the assembly, though it lacks the *power*. The word of the Lord remains unchanged. Only an apostle, we believe, could speak as Paul does in 1 Corinthians v. "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." This was spiritual power in an individual, not the judgment of the Church.* The same apostle, in reference to the same case, says to the assembly, "*Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.*" The act of putting away was the act, not merely of the apostle, but of the whole assembly. In this case, and in this way, the excommunicated person's sins were *retained*, though evidently a converted man. In the second epistle chapter ii. we find him fully restored. His repentance is accepted by the assembly—his sins are *remitted*. The overflowing of the apostle's heart on this occasion, and his exhortations to

* Delivering to Satan is an act of power—putting out a wicked person a duty attached to the faithfulness of the assembly. No doubt, exclusion from the assembly of God is a very serious thing and leaves us exposed to sorrow and just trouble of heart, and that from the enemy: but direct delivery to Satan is an act of positive power. It was done in Job's case for his good. It was done by Paul in 1 Corinthians v. though acting in the gathered assembly, and for the destruction of the flesh. And again, without reference to the assembly, in 1 Timothy i. as to Hymenæus and Alexander, that they might learn not to blaspheme. All discipline is for the correction of the individual, though to maintain withal the holiness of the house of God, and clear the consciences of the saints themselves. J.N.D.—***Present Testimony, Vol. i. p. 392, New Series.***

the Church, are valuable lessons for all who have to do with church government, and are intended to remove that cold suspicion with which an erring brother is too often received back to the privileges of the assembly. "Sufficient to such a man is this punishment [or censure] which was inflicted of many. So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. Wherefore, I beseech you, that ye would confirm your love toward him." Here we have a case in point, illustrative of the government of the assembly according to the will of Christ. "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

"ONE THING I DO."

MORN, noon, and night,
Through days o'ercast and bright,
My purpose still is one:
I have one end in view,
Only one thing I do,
Until my object's won.

Behind my back I fling,
As an unvalued thing,
My former self and ways;
And, reaching forward far,
I seek the things that are
Beyond time's lagging days.

The day declineth fast,
Almost its hours are past,
Its lustre waneth now;
That other heavenly day,
With its enduring ray,
Shall soon light up my brow.

Oh! may I follow still,
Faith's pilgrimage fulfil,
With steps both sure and fleet!
The longed-for goal I see,
Jesus waits there for me,
Haste, haste, my weary feet!

CORRESPONDENCE.

18. "M. F.," Loudwater. Your question involves the very foundations of Christianity. We give you, in reply, one brief but comprehensive statement of holy scripture. "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for *ye are not under the law*, but under grace." Again, "As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse." (See Rom. vi., vii.; Gal. iii.) If we are to be taught by scripture alone, then we learn that the believer is "dead to the law." He died in Christ. So the New Testament teaches us in manifold places. Now, what has the law to say to a dead man? or what has a dead man to say to the law? Is the law binding upon a dead man? The idea is absurd. "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become *dead to the law* by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."

True it is—blessedly true, that a Christian, walking in the Spirit, fulfils the practical righteousness of the law. (Rom. viii. 4.) But if you put a Christian under the law, you put him under the curse, for the apostle declares that as many as are on that ground, not merely as many as have not kept the law, are under the curse. In short, the entire teaching of Romans and Galatians is flatly opposed to the notion of putting Christians under the law whether for justification or as a rule of life. So far from its being the ground of justification, it is the ground of condemnation; and so far from its being a rule of *life*, it is a rule of death. (See Rom. vii. 10; 2 Cor. iii.)

Does any one in his right mind need to be told that a Christian is not to steal or commit murder? Surely not. But let us remember that christian morals rest on a christian, and not on a legal, basis. The law was given to man in the old creation, to test him and prove him, and cause the offence to abound. The Christian, on the other hand, is not in the old creation, but in the new. (2 Cor. v. 17.) He is not in the flesh, but in the Spirit. (Rom. viii. 9.)

Are these things mere figures of speech? or are they divine statements concerning the very foundations of Christianity? Let us look well to it, dear friend; let us see where we are. A person who, in his actual experience, is under the law, must be a stranger to the peace and liberty of the gospel; and, moreover, must be wholly ignorant of the true character of Christianity. If we trace the history

and the writings of the great apostle of the Gentiles, we shall find that there was nothing that so grieved and pained him—nothing he so strongly denounced—as the attempt to put Christians under the law in any shape or form, or for any object whatsoever. When he speaks of himself as "being under the law to Christ" (1 Cor. ix. 21), any competent person may see that the word is, "under rule or authority to Christ," and has nothing to do with being under the law of Moses, which the apostle everywhere denounces in the most unmeasured terms. The law-teachers get no quarter whatever from Paul. This is as clear as anything can be. Hence, if we are going to submit to scripture, the law question is easily settled. But if any man refuses to submit to that authority, we do not see that there is much use in talking to him.

19. "F.," Blackheath. Procure a copy of "Lectures on the Second Coming and Kingdom of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." By W. Kelly. Published by Broom, Paternoster Row.

We feel constrained to give the following extract of a letter from a dear friend in Wiltshire, in reference to the blessed work of Sunday school teaching. We give it simply for the encouragement of all who are engaged in that service. Our brother writes as follows, "I have no doubt but that you will be glad to hear a little of the way we are getting on with our Sunday school, about which you so kindly gave us a little advice when you were here. We commenced it on the 6th of December, with about 35 or 36, and we have had four or five added to our number since. Both teachers and scholars, so far, seem quite in earnest; and we have gone on very happily together in the work. You will rejoice to hear that the Lord has most graciously given us the seal of His blessing. Two little boys, of about twelve or thirteen years of age, have been converted; one of them a very clear decided case. He has gone on very nicely ever since, and is now desiring to come to the Lord's table. Several of the other scholars are also manifesting concern; and we trust the Lord has given us an earnest of the blessing He intends to pour out." May the foregoing cheer the hearts of Sunday school teachers; and may it stir up many of our dear young friends to enter, as earnest workers, upon a deeply interesting but sadly neglected field of labour. We specially note these words: "We have gone on very happily *together*." This is an essential point. There must be cordial and prayerful fellowship among the teachers, if any good is to

be done; and nothing so tends to promote this as the fact that each teacher really has at heart *the* one grand object, namely, the glory of Christ in the salvation of the dear children. When this is the case, the earnest worker is not hindered and harassed by that miserable spirit of crotchety hair-splitting as to the mode of doing things, which is the death blow to all real usefulness. May God bless this Wiltshire Sunday school, and all other Sunday schools throughout the world!

20. "M.," Montrose. 2 Timothy ii. 21, "If a man purge himself from these," refers, unquestionably, to the dishonourable vessels of the previous verse. This is the bounden duty of every one who desires to be a vessel sanctified and meet for the Master's use.

21. "E. S.," Kent. We can only say, the Lord be praised for the help ministered to you through our little serial. It was very kind of you to write.

22. "A Simple One," Oxford. We are at a loss to see your difficulty as to Philippians ii. 6, 7. Assuredly our blessed Lord was a real servant in every sense of the word. He was as really a servant (δουλος), as He was really God over all blessed for ever. He was very God and very Man —the veriest and only perfect servant that ever trod this earth. The more simple you are, the more clearly you will see this.

23. "A *Tempted and Suffering One.*" You have our fullest sympathy. We have met many of God's dear children in precisely your condition. Indeed they have, in stating their exercises, used your very words. "This," you will say, "is poor comfort for me." And yet it may not be so. We know a very dear saint of God who was under exercise for years, and the only thing that gave him the smallest comfort was the eighty-eighth Psalm. And why? Because there was not a single bit of comfort in it. Yet it was written by a saint of God; and therefore he might be a saint, though he was thoroughly miserable. We write not thus, dear friend, to lead you to be content in your present dark and unhappy condition. Far from it. We beseech you to look off from your feelings, your experiences, your evidences, yea, and your very faith itself, and rest in Christ and His finished work. God is satisfied with Christ on your behalf. Is He not enough to satisfy you? Do you want to add something of your own to Christ? This is really the question. May God bless you!

24. "J. V.," Hereford. We did receive a letter containing a query as to whether a Christian could consistently

play chess or drafts; but we really did not think it needful to reply to such a question. Surely, dear friend, you do not suppose that we presume to lay down rules for christian conduct. It must be a question between a man's own conscience and the Lord. Whatever cannot be done with a pure conscience, with the testimony of an ungrieved Spirit, and to the glory of God, had better be left undone. Furthermore, if we cannot ask God's blessing on what we are about to engage in, we had better let it alone. Beyond this we do not feel it to be our province to go. We generally find that when a man's conscience is at ease as to this or that pursuit, he has no occasion to apply to his fellow for counsel. Oh! to walk ever in the fear and love of God!

25. "I. P.," Rathmines. In Matthew you have our Lord presented as the Messiah. In Luke you have Him as Man. Hence the difference in the two narratives. All that is perfectly human you get in Luke. It is important to seize the grand object of the Spirit in each Gospel. In Matthew you have the "Son of David, Son of Abraham." In Mark you have the Servant—the Workman. In Luke, the Man. In John, the Son—the eternal Word. Now, in each Gospel, everything falls in perfectly with the main design of the Spirit therein. Thus in John you have no temptation in the wilderness, no transfiguration on the mount, no agony in the garden. These subjects would not fall in with the scope of that glorious Gospel. So also of other things upon which we cannot enter now. As to 1 Corinthians ix. 27—a passage over which so many have stumbled—we take it in its full, solemn force. Not all the gifts, not all the preaching power, not all the success of a Paul can ever do away with the necessity of keeping nature in subjection. It is not a question of eternal life in Christ, but of subduing the body. Let us never seek to weaken scripture or turn aside its keen edge from the conscience. May the Lord greatly bless you, beloved brother, and keep you in the shadow of His mighty hand continually!

26. "A Perplexed Sister." Our reply to "A Tempted and Suffering One" may help you. Your cases are very much alike. We merely add to you, dear friend, that the brother who considers it a *sine quâ non* to be able to tell the exact moment of your conversion is, in our judgment, completely mistaken. If that were so, it would unchristianize hundreds of God's dear saints. Your spiritual disease is self-occupation. The remedy is occupation with the love of God; the person and work of Christ; and the testimony of the Holy Ghost in scripture.

THE NAZARITE.

(Part iii.)

LET us look at the solemn case of Samson, as set before us in Judges xvi. He, in an evil hour, betrayed his secret and lost his power—lost it though he knew it not. But the enemy soon knew it. It was soon made manifest to all that the Nazarite had defiled the head of his consecration. "And it came to pass, when Delilah pressed him daily with her words, and urged him, so that his soul was vexed unto death, that he told her all his heart, and said unto her, There hath not come a razor upon mine head; for I have been a Nazarite unto God from my mother's womb; if I be shaven, then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man."

Here, alas! was the betrayal of the deep and holy secret of all his power. Up to this, his path had been one of strength and victory, simply because it had been one of holy Nazariteship. But the lap of Delilah proved too much for the heart of Samson, and what a thousand Philistines could not do, was done by the ensnaring influence of a single woman. Samson fell from the lofty elevation of the Nazarite down to the level of an ordinary man.

"And when Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, Come up this once; for he hath shewed me all his heart. Then the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and brought money in their hand. And she made him sleep upon her knees [alas! alas! a fatal sleep to God's Nazarite]; and she called for a man, and she caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head; and she began to afflict him, and his strength went from him. And she said, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times before,

and shake myself. And he wist not that the Lord was departed from him. But the Philistines took him and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house."

Oh! reader, what a picture! How solemn! How admonitory! What a melancholy spectacle was Samson, going out to shake himself, "*as* at other times!" Alas! the "*as*" was out of place. He might shake himself, but it was no longer "as at other times;" for the power was gone; the Lord was departed from him; and the once powerful Nazarite became a blind prisoner; and instead of triumphing over the Philistines, he had to grind in their prison house. So much for yielding to mere nature. Samson never regained his liberty. He was permitted, through the mercy of God, to gain one more victory over the uncircumcised; but that victory cost him his life. God's Nazarites must keep themselves pure or lose their power. In their case, power and purity are inseparable. They cannot get on without inward holiness; and hence the urgent need of being ever on the watch against the various things which tend to draw away the heart, distract the mind, and lower the tone of spirituality. Let us ever keep before our souls those words of our chapter, "All the days of his separation he is holy unto the Lord." Holiness is the grand and indispensable characteristic of all the days of Nazariteship, so that when once holiness is forfeited, Nazariteship is at an end.

What then, it may be asked, is to be done? The scripture before us supplies the answer, "And if any man die very suddenly by him, and he hath defiled the head of his consecration; then he shall shave his head in the day of his cleansing, on the seventh day shall he shave it. And on the eighth day he shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons, to the priest, to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation."

Let us then beware how we trifle with sin. Let us remember that ere one stain of the guilt of sin, even the very smallest, could be removed, the blessed Lord Jesus Christ had to pass through all the unutterable horrors of Calvary. That intensely bitter cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" is the only thing that can give us any proper idea of what sin is; and into the profound depths of that cry no mortal or angel can ever enter. But though we can never fathom the mysterious depths of the sufferings of Christ, we should at least seek to meditate more habitually upon His cross and passion, and in this way, reach a much deeper view of the awfulness of sin, in the sight of God. If, indeed, sin was so dreadful, so abhorrent to a holy God, that He was constrained to turn away the light of His countenance from that blessed One who had dwelt in His bosom from all eternity; if He had to forsake Him because He was bearing sin in His own body on the tree—then, what must sin be?

Oh! reader, let us thoughtfully weigh these things. May they ever have a place deep down in these hearts of ours, that are so easily betrayed into sin. How lightly, at times, do we think of that which cost the Lord Jesus everything, not only life, but that which is better and dearer than life, even the light of God's countenance. May we have a far deeper sense of the hatefulness of sin! May we most sedulously watch against the bare movement of the eye in a wrong direction, for we may rest assured that the heart will follow the eye, and the feet will follow the heart, and thus we get away from the Lord, lose the sense of His presence and His love, and become miserable; or, if not miserable, what is far worse, dead, cold, and callous—"hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

May God, in His infinite mercy, keep us from falling! May we have grace to watch more jealously against everything, no matter what, that might defile the head of our consecration! It is a serious thing to get out of commu-

nion; and a most perilous thing to attempt to go on in the Lord's service with a defiled conscience. True it is that grace pardons and restores, but we never regain what we have lost. This latter is set forth with solemn emphasis in the passage of scripture before us. "He shall consecrate unto the Lord the days of his separation, and shall bring a lamb of the first year for a trespass offering; but *the days that were before shall be lost* (or, shall fall, as the margin reads it), because his separation was defiled. And the priest shall offer the one for a sin-offering, and the other for a burnt offering, and make an atonement for him, for that he sinned by the dead, and shall hallow his head that same day. And he shall consecrate unto the Lord the days of his separation, and shall bring a lamb of the first year for a trespass offering; but the days that were before shall be lost, because his separation was defiled." Numbers vi. 9—12.

Here we find atonement, in its two grand aspects, as the only ground on which the Nazarite could be restored to communion. He had contracted defilement, and that defilement could only be removed by the blood of the sacrifice. We might deem it a very trifling matter to touch a dead body, and particularly under such circumstances. It might be said, "How could he help touching it, when the man had suddenly dropped dead by his side?" To all this the reply is at once simple and solemn, God's Nazarites must maintain personal purity; and, moreover, the standard by which their purity is to be regulated is not human but divine. The mere touch of death was sufficient to break the link of communion, and had the Nazarite presumed to go on as though nothing had happened, he would have been flying in the face of God's commandment, and bringing down heavy judgment upon himself. But, blessed be God, grace had made provision. There was the burnt offering—the type of the death of Christ to Godward. There was the sin offering—the type of that same death to usward. And

there was the trespass offering—the type of the death of Christ, not only in its application to the root or principle of sin in the nature, but also to the sin committed. In a word, it needed the full virtue of the death of Christ to remove the defilement caused by the simple touch of a dead body. This is peculiarly solemnizing. Sin is a dreadful thing in God's sight—most dreadful. A single sinful thought, a sinful look, a sinful word, is enough to bring a dark heavy cloud over the soul, which will hide from our view the light of God's countenance, and plunge us into deep distress and misery.

This is a point, in our subject, full of instruction and admonition for our souls. When the Nazarite became defiled, by any means, even by the touch of a dead body, he had to begin over again. It was not merely the days of his defilement that were lost, or let fall, but actually all the days of his previous Nazariteship. All went for nothing, and this simply by reason of touching a dead body.

What does this teach us? It teaches this, at least, that when we diverge, the breadth of a hair, from the narrow path of communion, and get away from the Lord, we must return to the very point from which we set out, and begin *de novo*. We have many examples of this in scripture; and it would be our wisdom to consider them, and also to weigh the great practical truth which they illustrate.

"O that, when Christians meet and part,
These words were graved on every heart—
They're dear to God!
However wilful and unwise,
We'll look on them with loving eyes—
They're dear to God.
O wonder! to the Eternal One,
Dear as His own beloved Son;
Dearer to Jesus than His blood,
Dear as the Spirit's fixed abode—
They're dear to God."

THE WORK OF AN EVANGELIST.

(Part iii.)

It is a serious reflection for the evangelist, that wherever God's Spirit is at work, there Satan is sure to be busy. We must remember and ever be prepared for this. The enemy of Christ and the enemy of souls is always on the watch, always hovering about to see what he can do, either to hinder or corrupt the work of the gospel. This need not terrify or even discourage the workman; but it is well to bear it in mind and be watchful. Satan will leave no stone unturned to mar or hinder the blessed work of God's Spirit. He has proved himself the ceaseless, vigilant enemy of that work from the days of Eden down to the present moment.

Now, in tracing the history of Satan, we find him acting in two characters, namely, as a serpent or as a lion—using craft or violence. He will try to deceive; and, if he cannot succeed, then he will use violence. Thus it is in this sixteenth chapter of the Acts. The apostle's heart had been cheered and refreshed by what we moderns should pronounce, "a beautiful case of conversion." Lydia's was a very real and decided case, in every respect. It was direct, positive, and unmistakable. She received Christ into her heart, and, forthwith, took christian ground by submitting to the deeply significant ordinance of baptism. Nor was this all. She immediately opened her house to the Lord's messengers. Hers was no mere lip profession. It was not merely *saying* she believed. She proved her faith in Christ, not only by going down under the water of baptism, but also by identifying herself and her household with the name and cause of that blessed One whom she had received into her heart by faith.

All this was clear and satisfactory. But we must now

look at something quite different. The serpent appears upon the scene in the person of

THE FALSE PROFESSOR.

"It came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying. The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation. And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour." Verses 16—18.

Here, then, was a case eminently calculated to test the spirituality and integrity of the evangelist. Most men would have hailed such words from the lips of this damsel as an encouraging testimony to the work. Why then was Paul grieved? Why did he not allow her to continue to bear witness to the object of his mission? Was she not saying the truth? Were they not the servants of the most high God? And were they not shewing the way of salvation? Why be grieved with—why silence such a witness? Because it was of Satan; and, most assuredly, the apostle was not going to receive testimony from him. He could not allow Satan to help him in his work. True, he might have walked about the streets of Philippi owned and honoured as a servant of God, if only he had consented to let the devil aid him in the work. But Paul could never consent to this. He could never suffer the enemy to mix himself up with the work of the Lord. Had he done so, it would have given the deathblow to the testimony at Philippi. To have permitted Satan to put his hand to the work, would have involved the total shipwreck of the mission to Macedonia.

It is deeply important for the Lord's workman to weigh this matter. We may rest assured that this narrative of

the damsel has been written for our instruction. It is not only a statement of what has occurred, but a sample of what may occur, and indeed what does occur every day. Christendom is full of false profession. There are millions of false professors at this moment, throughout the wide domain of baptized profession. It is very sad to be obliged to say it; but so it is; and we must press the fact upon the attention of the reader. We are surrounded, on all sides, by those who give a merely nominal assent to the truths of the christian religion. They go on, from week to week, and from year to year, professing to believe certain things which they do not in reality believe at all. There are thousands who, every Lord's day, profess to believe in the forgiveness of sins, and yet, were such persons to be examined, it would be found that they either do not think about the matter at all, or, if they do think, they deem it the very height of presumption for any one to be sure that his sins are forgiven.

This is very serious. Only think of a person standing up in the presence of God and saying, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins," and, all the while he does not believe any such thing! Can anything be more hardening to the heart, or more deadening to the conscience than this? It is our firm persuasion that the forms and the formularies of professing Christianity are doing more to ruin precious souls than all the forms of moral pravity put together. It is perfectly appalling to contemplate the countless multitudes that are, at this moment, rushing along the well-trodden highway of religious profession, down to the eternal flames of hell. We feel bound to raise a warning note. We want the reader most solemnly to take heed as to this matter.

We have only instanced one special formulary, because it refers to a subject of very general interest and importance. How few, comparatively, are clear and settled as to the question of forgiveness of sins! How few are able, calmly,

decidedly, and intelligently, to say, "*I know* that my sins are forgiven!" How few are in the real enjoyment of full forgiveness of sins, through faith in that precious blood that cleanseth from all sin! How solemn, therefore, to hear people giving utterance to such words as these, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins," when, in point of fact, they do not believe their own very utterance! Is the reader in the habit of using such a form of words? Does he believe it? Say, dear friend, are thy sins forgiven? Art thou washed in the precious, atoning blood of Christ? If not, why not? The way is open. There is no hindrance. Thou art perfectly welcome, this moment, to the free benefits of the atoning work of Christ. Though thy sins be as scarlet, though they be black as midnight, black as hell, though they rise like a dreadful mountain before the vision of thy troubled soul, and threaten to sink thee into eternal perdition; yet do these words shine with divine and heavenly lustre, on the page of inspiration, "*The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from* ALL *sin.*" 1 John i. 7.

But mark, friend, do not go on, week after week, mocking God, hardening thine own heart, and carrying out the schemes of the great enemy of Christ, by a false profession. This is precisely what we see in the damsel possessed by a spirit of divination. This is *the* point in her history which links itself with the present awful condition of Christendom. What was the burden of her song, during those "many days" in the which the apostle narrowly considered her case? "These men are the servants of the most high God, which *shew unto us* the way of salvation." But she was not saved—she was not delivered—she was, all the while, under Satan's power. And not only so, but Satan was seeking to use her for the purpose of marring and hindering the work of the gospel.

Thus it is with Christendom—thus it is with each false professor throughout the length and breadth of the pro-

fessing church. Every one who professes to believe in the forgiveness of sins, and yet does not believe in it, does not know that his sins are forgiven, does not think that any one can know it until the day of judgment—every such person is, in principle, on the ground of the damsel possessed with the spirit of divination. What she said was true enough; but she was not true in saying it. This was the grievous point in the case. It is one thing to say or assent to what is true, and another thing to be true in saying it. Of what possible use was it to go on, from day to day, giving utterance to the formulary, "They shew unto us the way of salvation," while she remained in the same unsaved, unblessed condition? None whatever; and we know of nothing, even in the deepest depths of moral evil, or in the darkest shades of heathenism, more truly awful than the state of careless, hardened, self-satisfied, fallow-ground professors, who, on each successive Lord's day, give utterance, either in their prayers or their singing, to words which, so far as they are concerned, are wholly false.

The thought of this is, at times, almost overwhelming. We cannot dwell upon it. It is really too sorrowful. We shall therefore pass on, having once more solemnly warned the reader against every shade and degree of false profession. Let him not say or sing aught that he does not heartily believe. The devil is at the bottom of all false profession, and by means thereof he seeks to bring discredit on the work of the Lord.

But how truly refreshing to contemplate the actings of the faithful apostle in the case of the damsel. Had he been seeking his own ends, or had he been merely a minister of religion, he might have welcomed her words as a tributary stream to swell the tide of his popularity, or promote the interest of his cause. But Paul was not a mere minister of religion; he was a minister of Christ—a totally different thing. And we may notice that the damsel does not say a word about Christ. She breathes not the

precious, peerless name of Jesus. There is total silence as to Him. This stamps the whole thing as of Satan. "No man can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." People may speak of God, and of religion; but Christ has no place in their hearts. The Pharisees, in the ninth of John, could say to the poor man, "Give God the praise;" but in speaking of Jesus, they could say, "This man is a sinner."

Thus it is ever in the case of corrupt religion, or false profession. Thus it was with the damsel in Acts xvi. There was not a syllable about Christ. There was no truth, no life, no reality. It was hollow and false. It was of Satan; and hence Paul would not and could not own it; he was grieved with it and utterly rejected it.

Would that all were like him! Would that there were the singleness of eye to detect, and the integrity of heart to reject the work of Satan in much that is going on around us! We are thoroughly convinced that the Holy Ghost has written the narrative of this damsel for our instruction. It may be said, perhaps, that we have no such cases now. We reply, "For what end did the Holy Ghost pen the record?" Alas! there are thousands of cases, this moment, answering to this type of the damsel. We cannot but view it as a sample case—an illustration of Christendom's false profession, which exhibits far more of the craft and subtle wiles of the enemy than is to be found in the ten thousand forms in which moral pravity clothes itself. Everybody can judge of drunkenness, theft, and such like; but it demands an eye anointed with heavenly eye-salve to detect the wily workings of the serpent behind the fair profession of a baptized world.

Such an eye Paul, through grace, possessed. He was not to be deceived. He saw that the whole affair was an effort of Satan to mix himself up with the work, that thus he might spoil it altogether. "But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee, in the name of Jesus Christ, to come out of her. And he came out the same hour."

This was true spiritual action. Paul was not in any haste to come into collision with the evil one, or even to pronounce upon the case at all; he waited for many days; but the very moment that the enemy was detected, he is resisted and repulsed with uncompromising decision. A less spiritual workman might have allowed the thing to pass, under the idea that it might turn to account and help forward the work. Paul thought differently; and he was right. He would take no help from Satan. He was not going to work by such an agency; and hence, in the name of Jesus Christ—that name which the enemy so sedulously excluded—he puts Satan to flight.

But no sooner was Satan repulsed as the serpent, than he assumed the character of the lion. Craft having failed, he tries violence. "And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the market-place unto the rulers, and brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, and teach customs which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans. And the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them. And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely." Verses 19—23.

Thus the enemy seemed to triumph; but be it remembered that Christ's warriors gain their most splendid victories by apparent defeat. The devil made a great mistake when he cast the apostle into prison. Indeed it is consolatory to reflect that he has never done anything else but make mistakes, from the moment that he left his first estate down to the present moment. His entire history, from beginning to end, is one tissue of errors. But more of this in our next.

(To be continued, if the Lord will.)

SHORT PAPERS ON CHURCH HISTORY;

&c., &c., &c.

THIS PRINCIPLE OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT STILL APPLICABLE.

But "how can these principles be carried out now?" is still the question and difficulty with many. Well, we must just go back to the word of God. We ought to be able and willing to say, "We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth." 2 Cor. xiii. 8.

The administrative authority and power of which we speak was not only given to Peter and the other apostles, but also to the Church. In Matthew xviii. we have the working out of the principle laid down in chapter xvi. "Tell it to the Church: but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto you as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever *ye* shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever *ye* shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.....For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Thus we learn that the acts of the two or three, gathered together in Christ's name, have the same divine sanction as the administration of Peter. And again, in John xx., the Lord delivers the same principle of government to the *disciples*, not merely to the *apostles*, and that too on resurrection ground, where the assembly is livingly united to Christ as the risen Man. This is all important. The spirit of life in Christ Jesus makes the *disciples* free—every disciple free—from the law of sin and death. The Church is built upon "this rock"—Christ in resurrection, and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it. "Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side: then were

the *disciples* glad when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: *whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.*" Here the Lord sets up, we may say, and fairly starts, the New Creation. The disciples are filled and clothed with peace, and with the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. They are to go forth as His messengers, from the resurrection side of His empty grave, bearing the blessed message of peace and eternal life to a world bowed down with sin, sorrow, and death. The principle of their own internal government is also clearly laid down: and its due administration will always give to the christian assembly a distinctive and heavenly character, in the presence of both God and man.

THE PRINCIPLE OF RECEPTION AT THE BEGINNING.

But as this principle is the proper basis of all christian congregations, it may be well to look for a moment at its operation in the days of the apostles. Surely they understood its meaning and how to apply it.

On the day of Pentecost, and for some time after, it does not appear that the young converts were subjected to any examination as to the reality of their faith, either by the apostles or others. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized, and the same day there were added to them about three thousand souls." Gladly receiving the word was the ground of baptism, and fellowship; but the work was then entirely in Christ's own hands. "And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved." The attempt to deceive by Ananias and Sapphira was at once detected. Peter acts in his right place, but the Holy Ghost was there in ungrieved majesty and power, and Peter owns it. Hence he says to Ananias, "Why hath Satan

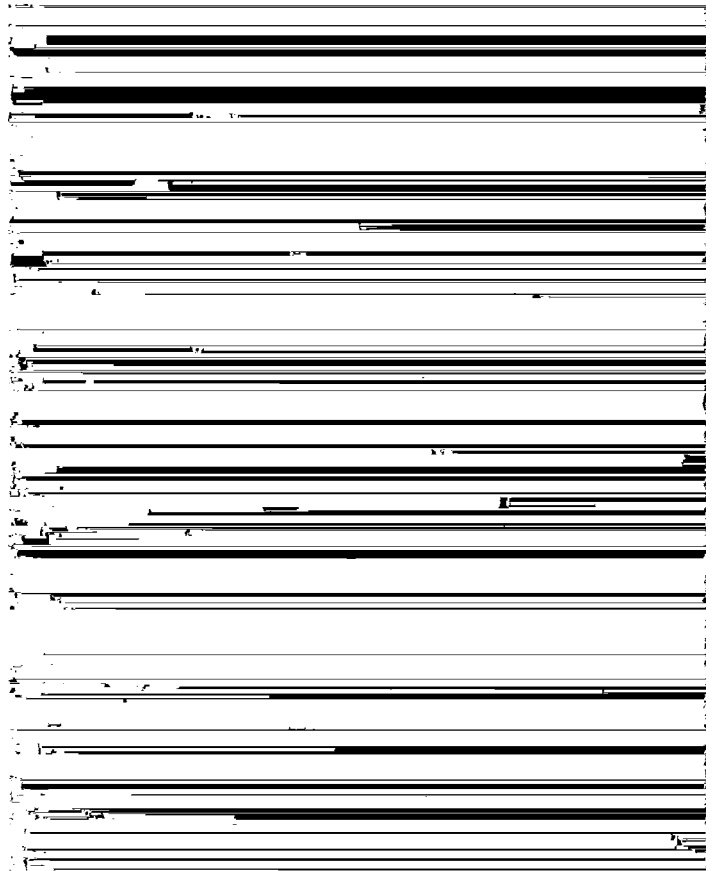
filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?" But this virgin state of things soon passed away. Failure set in—the Holy Ghost was grieved, and it became necessary to examine the applicants, as to whether their motives, objects, and state of soul were according to the mind of Christ. We are now in the condition of things described in 2 Timothy ii. We are only to have fellowship "with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart."

After the Church became so mixed with merely nominal professors, great care was necessary in receiving persons to communion. It was not enough that a person *said* he was converted and claimed admission into the Church on the ground of his own statements. He must submit to be examined by experienced Christians. When one professes to be awakened to a sense of sin, and to be brought to repentance before God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, his confession must be examined by those who have gone through the same kind of experience themselves. And even where conversion is manifestly genuine, godly care, with tenderness, must be exercised in reception; something dishonouring to Christ, injurious to themselves, weakening to the assembly, may be entertained, even unconsciously. Herein spiritual discernment is needed. And this is the truest kindness to the applicant, and nothing more than a necessary care for the honour of Christ and the purity of communion. Christian fellowship would be at an end, if persons were received on the sole ground of their own opinion of themselves.

In Acts ix. we see the practical working of this principle in the case of the great apostle himself. And surely, if he could not be accredited without adequate testimony, who need complain? True, his case was peculiar, still it may be taken as a practical illustration of our subject.

We find both Ananias at Damascus, and the Church at Jerusalem questioning the reality of Saul's conversion, though it was a miraculous one. Of course he had been

an open enemy to the name of Christ, and this would make the disciples still more careful. Ananias hesitates to baptize him until fully satisfied of his conversion. He consults the Lord on the subject; but after hearing His mind, he goes directly to Saul; assures him that he has been sent by the same Jesus that appeared to him on his way to Damascus: and confirms the truth of what had taken



Church, and the doors of the kingdom were not opened. But the difference between the *old* and the *new* will be more distinctly seen when we speak of the great events of the day of Pentecost. We begin with the types of Leviticus, chapter xxiii.

The children of Israel were commanded to bring a sheaf of the first-fruits of their harvest to the priest, that he might wave it before the Lord, *to be accepted for them.* This rite, we believe, shadowed forth our Lord's resurrection on the morning after the Jewish sabbath, and the Christian's acceptance before God in the risen Christ. "Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the first-fruits of your harvest unto the priest; and he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it." Compare Matthew xxviii. and Mark xvi.

Seven full weeks after the waving of the sheaf, the feast of Pentecost was celebrated. The former was reckoned to be the first day of the harvest in Judea; the latter supposed the corn to be fully gathered in. Then they had a solemn festival of thanksgiving for "harvest home." Two loaves of bread, baken with the flour of the new harvest, characterized this festival. They were to be baken with *leaven*, and brought *out* of their habitations. Some have thought that the two loaves prefigured the *out-calling* of the Church as composed of Jew and Gentile. Be this as it may, the *number* is significant. Two witnesses were necessary for a testimony in Israel. The leaven indicates, we doubt not, indwelling sin in the believer, and, of course, in the Church, viewed in its time condition.

With the wave sheaf—beautiful type of the risen Christ, pure and holy—sacrifices of a sweet savour were offered; but no sacrifice for sin. With the two wave loaves—type of those who are Christ's—a sin-offering was presented.

Sin being there, a sin-offering was needed to cover it. Though the one perfect sacrifice of Christ answered to God for both indwelling sin, and the many actual sins of the life; still, as a matter of fact and experience, sin dwells in us: and will do so as long as we are in this world. All acknowledge this, though all may not see the completeness of the work of Christ. "The Christian has by one offering been perfected for ever, though he may humble himself and make confession to God for every failure."

The typical significance of Pentecost was remarkably fulfilled in the descent of the Holy Ghost. He came down to gather together the children of God that were scattered abroad. (John xi. 52.) By this great event, the system of Judaism was set aside, and the new vessel of testimony—the Church of God—was introduced. And now, observe, the order of events. First,

THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION OF CHRIST.

INCARNATION, CRUCIFIXION, RESURRECTION, are the great foundation truths, or facts, of the Church—of Christianity. Incarnation was necessary to crucifixion, and both to resurrection. It is blessedly true that Christ died on the cross for our sins; but it is equally true, that the believer died in His death. (See Rom. vi., Col. ii.) The Christian's life is life in resurrection. The Church is built on the risen Christ. No truths can be more blessed and wonderful than incarnation and crucifixion; but the Church is associated with Him who is risen and glorified.

In the first chapter of the Acts, we have that which is connected with the Lord's resurrection and ascension; and also with the actions of the apostles before the descent of the Holy Ghost. The blessed Lord, though in resurrection, still speaks and acts by the Holy Ghost. It was "*through the Holy Ghost*" that He gave commandments unto the apostles whom He had chosen. This is worthy of special note as teaching us two things. 1. The character of our

union with Christ; the Holy Ghost in the Christian, and in the risen Lord, joins them together. "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." By the "one spirit" they are united. 2. This important fact points out the blessed truth of the Holy Ghost dwelling and acting in the Christian also, after he is actually in resurrection. Then He will not—as He has now—have the flesh in us to contend against, but will, ungrieved and unhindered, lead us on to the full joys of heaven—the happy worship, the blessed service, and the whole will of God.

The risen Lord next exhorts the apostles to wait in Jerusalem for "the promise of the Father," which, saith He, ye have heard of Me. "For John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." It is no longer a question of temporal promises to Israel; that field must be left till a future day. The Father's promise of the Holy Ghost was an entirely different thing, and widely different in its results.

Several things "pertaining to the kingdom of God" having been spoken of between the Lord and His apostles, He ascends to heaven, and a cloud receives Him out of their sight. The Lord's return is also most plainly and distinctly taught at the same time. "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven, as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." It is quite evident from these words, that He ascended *personally, visibly, bodily,* and that He shall so come again *in like manner*—that He will again appear beneath the heavens, and be manifested to people on the earth, *personally, visibly, and bodily,* but then it will be in power and great glory.

The apostles and disciples had now learnt two things. 1. That Jesus was taken up out of this world into heaven. 2. That He was coming back again into this world. On these two *great facts their testimony was founded.* But Jerusalem was to be the starting-point of their ministry, and they were to wait for power from above. We now come to the second great event, important beyond all others, with respect to man's condition in this world—the gift of the Holy Ghost. Now, it is to be, not only God *for* us, but God *in* us. This took place on the day of Pentecost.

BE NOT SATISFIED WITH GLEANING.

BE not satisfied with gleaning
Scanty measures for thy soul,
When His pastures smile with blossoms,
And thou mayst enjoy the whole.

Rest not satisfied with sipping
From the wayside rills of love;
O drink freely from the Fountain!
This thy happiness will prove.

As His child, thou art a pilgrim,
And thy Lord doth give thee here
Bread of heaven thy heart to strengthen,
And His wine of love to cheer.

Be not satisfied with leaning
Lightly on the Saviour's breast;
Little trust brings fears and faintings,
And will rob thy soul of rest.

Canst thou not lean firm upon Him,
HIM *on whom thy sins were laid?*
Will He keep thee at a distance,
Now thy debts are fully paid?

Nay, thou knowest He will rather
Round thy soul His love entwine,
Till, in childlike trusting fondness,
Thou dost on His breast recline.

E. E.

CORRESPONDENCE.

27. "J. B.," Toronto. It is your happy privilege to rest in the assurance that God will hear and answer the prayer of faith. May He comfort and sustain your heart by His own most blessed ministry! To Him we commend you, in much brotherly love and sympathy.

28. "A. & J. W.," London. You must look to the Lord to guide you as to details. We can merely speak of the great general principle. A true spiritual instinct would guide in a thousand things. One should be able to judge by the practical effect of such and such a style of reading, as to whether it ought to be indulged in. No one can attempt to lay down rules for another. Circumstances alter cases.

29. "J. T. S.," Hackney. "Fellowship in the gospel" is a very wide and very blessed expression. It is very much more than "taking a seat when a brother is preaching." Many might do this and not have a single atom of fellowship in the gospel; and, on the other hand, many might have the fullest fellowship in the gospel and yet not be able to attend the public preaching at all. We should judge that where the *heart* is really in the work—really bent on the salvation of souls—there will be unmistakable fellowship in every way. There will be earnest prayer for the progress of the gospel. There will be a readiness to help on the work by all means within our reach, whether it be by giving of our substance, or receiving to our hearts and to our homes those who "Go forth taking nothing of the Gentiles." As to your second query, we have only to reply that it is wholly out of our power to say why "Scores of evangelists in London cannot find any place where they can speak for the Lord?" We are amazed at such a question. We believe that when God sends forth an evangelist, He will find him a place to preach in. But let men take heed how they run unsent. Your third query is, to some extent, anticipated in our answer to your first.

30. "Mary." We assuredly judge that the "oil" in the parable of the ten virgins refers to the Holy Spirit, which all true believers possess. The foolish virgins "took *no oil* with them." This is emphatic. They had the lamp of profession, but no oil. Wick without oil must soon go out, and so it was with the foolish virgins. It is a most solemn word for all mere professors.

31. "W. M.," Peterhead. 1 Peter iii. 19, 20 teaches that the Spirit of Christ, in Noah, preached to those whose spirits are now in prison because they did not hearken to the preaching and believe it. A deeply solemn word, surely, for Christendom with its millions of hardened professors! There is no foundation in the above scripture for the monstrous notion that our Lord went to preach to spirits in hell. What could be the object of preaching to such?

32. "T. M. J.," Boston. 1 Corinthians iii. 10—15, refers to the various workmen who should build upon the foundation which had been laid. Some of these might build badly, and some might build well. The wood, hay, and stubble shall all be burnt up. The gold, silver and precious stones shall abide. You must distinguish between what Christ builds, and what man builds. In Matthew xvi. Christ says, "Upon this rock *I will build* my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." But it would be a very serious mistake to apply this passage to what man builds; for, most assuredly, the gates of hell shall prevail against "wood, hay, and stubble"—all the spurious materials which men have built upon the original foundation. This is precisely what the Church of Rome has done; and where, we may ask, have the gates of hell more signally prevailed than in the case of that awful apostasy? It is well to see, distinctly, the terrible consequences of applying Matthew xvi. 18 to man's building. It is the germ of popery. Your second question is answered in No. 31. As to your third question, we have only to say that the New Testament teacheth us, in manifold places, that the Christian is *dead to the world;* not merely to certain gross things in the world—specially bad parts of the world—but to *the world,* in all its aspects. What then has a dead man to do with the world's politics? As Christians, we are sent into this world, even as Jesus was sent into it. What had He to do with the world's politics? He paid tribute; so should we. He obeyed the powers that be; we should do the same. He suffered under this world's powers; and we may be called to the same. We are instructed to pray for the powers; and we are to do so quite irrespective of the nature or character of the power. In fact, when the apostle penned that precept, the imperial sceptre was wielded by one of the worst men that ever lived. The Christian is taught to be subject to the powers that be; he is never taught to wield that power

—never once, but the very reverse. "Our citizenship is in heaven." We are only pilgrims and strangers in the world. The cross of our Lord has broken every link between us and this world. The resurrection has introduced us into a new world altogether. In the death of Christ, we cleared the shores of the old world. In His resurrection, we have landed on the shores of the new. "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." Therefore, "Set your affection on things above, *not* on things on the earth." (Col. iii.) Oh! to know the formative, sanctifying power of this precious line of truth!

33. "J. D.," Westerham. We most fully agree with all you say as to the need of separation from the world. Would that our separation, in every way, were more intense! But we judge it would have been more courteous in you to have closed your shop on the occasion to which you refer. We do not think it would have been conformity to the world, but a simple mark of respect to the memory of the departed, and to his mourning family. At the same time, we must bear in mind that each one has to act before the Lord. To your own Master you stand or fall. God forbid that we should attempt to lay down rules for any one; we merely give our judgment as you have asked it.

34. "G. T. H.," Brighton. The whole subject is gone into in a little volume entitled "Notes on Exodus," to be had of the publisher, Mr. Morrish, 24, Warwick Lane, Paternoster Row, London. E.C.

35. "Q. R." We know many very true hearted christians who seem to have no difficulty as to the employment you name; but this, of course, is no guide for you. We must, therefore, simply repeat our former answer. It is entirely a question for your own conscience before the Lord. Come what may, you must keep a good conscience. You have our hearty sympathy in your present exercise; but you must beware of attaching too much weight to the opinions of men.

Communications have come to hand from "W. W.," Colchester; "An Anxious Sister," Oswestry; "A. B. C.," Maidstone; "J. B.," Kingstown; "C. M. H.," West Green; "H. R. W.;" "J. W.," Woodside; "A Believer in Jesus;" "G. S. M.," London; "H. J. E.," London;" "W. B.," London; A package of leaflets by "C. F. C.;" "C. A.," Woodbury; "R. S.," Swansea; "M. J. S.," St. Leonards on Sea; "A. D. M.," Birmingham: "A Constant Reader," Torquay.

THE WORK OF AN EVANGELIST.

(Part iv.)

It has been already remarked that the devil made a great mistake when he cast Paul into prison at Philippi. To nature's view it might have seemed otherwise; but, in the judgment of faith, the servant of Christ was much more in his right place, in prison for the truth's sake, than outside at his Master's expense. True, Paul might have saved himself. He might have been an honoured man, owned and acknowledged as "a servant of the most high God," if he had only accepted the false profession of the damsel, and suffered the devil to help him in his work. But he could not do this, and hence he had to suffer. "And the multitude [ever fickle and easily swayed] rose up together against them; and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them. And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely. Who, having received such a charge, *thrust* them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks." Acts xvi. 22—24.

Here, then, some might have said, was an end to the work of the evangelist, in the city of Philippi. Here was an effectual stopper to the preaching. Not so; the prison was the very place, at that moment, for the evangelist. His work was there. He was to find a congregation within the prison walls which he could not have found outside. But this leads us in the third and last place, to the case of

THE HARDENED SINNER.

It was very unlikely that the jailor would ever have found his way to the prayer meeting by the river side. He had little care for such things. He was neither an earnest seeker, nor a false professor. He was a hardened sinner,

pursuing a very hardening occupation. Jailors, from the nature of their office, are, generally speaking, hard and stern men. No doubt, there are exceptions. There are some tender-hearted men to be found in such situations; but, as a rule, jailors are not tender. It would hardly suit them to be so. They have to do with the very worst class of society. Much of the crime of the whole country comes under their notice; and many of the criminals come under their charge. Accustomed to the rough and the coarse, they are apt to become rough and coarse themselves.

Now, judging from the inspired narrative before us, we may well question if the Philippian jailor was an exception to the general rule with respect to men of his class. Certainly he does not seem to have shewn much tenderness to Paul and Silas. "He *thrust* them into the *inner* prison, and made their feet *fast* in the stocks." He seems to have gone to the utmost extreme in making them uncomfortable.

But God had rich mercy in store for that poor, hardened, cruel jailor: and, as it was not at all likely that he would go to hear the gospel, the Lord sent the gospel to him; and, moreover, He made the devil the instrument of sending it. Little did the jailor know whom he was thrusting into the inner prison—little did he anticipate what was to happen ere another sun should rise. And we may add, little did the devil think of what he was doing when he sent the preachers of the gospel into jail, there to be the means of the jailor's conversion. But the Lord Jesus Christ knew what He was about to do, in the case of a poor hardened sinner. He can make the wrath of man to praise Him, and restrain the remainder.

> "He everywhere hath sway,
> And all things serve His might,
> His every act pure blessing is,
> His path unsullied light.

When He makes bare His arm,
Who shall His work withstand
When He His people's cause defends,
Who then shall stay His hand?"

It was His purpose to save the jailor; and so far from Satan's being able to frustrate that purpose, he was actually made the instrument of accomplishing it. "God's purpose shall stand; and he will do all his pleasure." And where He sets His love upon a poor, wretched, guilty sinner, He will have him in heaven, spite of all the malice and rage of hell.

As to Paul and Silas, it is very evident that they were in their right place in the prison. They were there for the truth's sake, and the Lord was with them. Hence they were perfectly happy. What, though they were confined within the gloomy walls of a prison, with their feet made fast in the stocks, prison walls could not confine their spirits. Nothing can hinder the joy of one who has the Lord with him. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were happy in the fiery furnace. Daniel was happy in the lions' den; and Paul and Silas were happy in the dungeon of Philippi. "And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises to God: and the prisoners heard them."

What sounds to issue from the inner prison! We may safely say that no such sounds had ever issued thence before. Curses and execrations and blasphemous words might have been heard; sighs, cries, and groans had often come forth from those walls. But to hear the accents of prayer and praise, ascending at the midnight hour, must have seemed strange indeed. Faith can sing as sweetly in a dungeon as at a prayer meeting. It matters not where we are, provided always that we have God with us. His presence lights up the darkest cell, and turns a dungeon into the very gate of heaven. He can make His servants happy anywhere, and give them victory over the most

adverse circumstances, and cause them to shout for joy in scenes where nature would be overwhelmed with sorrow.

But the Lord had His eye upon the jailor. He had written his name in the Lamb's book of life, before the foundation of the world, and He was now about to lead him into the full joy of His salvation. "And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed." Verse 26.

Now, if Paul had not been in full communion with the mind and heart of Christ, he would assuredly have turned to Silas and said, "Now is the moment for us to make our escape. God has most manifestly appeared for us, and set before us an open door. If ever there was an opening of divine providence surely this is one." But no; Paul knew better. He was in the full current of His blessed Master's thoughts, and in full sympathy with his Master's heart. Hence, he made no attempt to escape. The claims of *truth* had brought him into prison; the activities of *grace* kept him there. Providence opened the door; but faith refused to walk out. People talk of being guided by providence; but if Paul had been so guided, the jailor would never have been a jewel in his crown.

"And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled." (Ver. 27.) This proves, very plainly, that the earthquake, with all its attendant circumstances, had not touched the hard heart of the jailor. He naturally supposed, when he saw the doors open, that the prisoners were all gone. He could not imagine a number of prisoners sitting quietly in jail when the doors lay open and their chains were loosed. And then what was to become of him, if the prisoners were gone? How could he face the authorities? Impossible. Anything but that. Death, even by his own hand, was preferable to that.

Thus the devil had conducted this hardened sinner to the very brink of the precipice, and he was about to give him the final and fatal push over the edge, and down to the eternal flames of hell; when lo, a voice of love fell upon his ear. It was the voice of Jesus through the lips of His servant—a voice of tender and deep compassion—"*Do thyself no harm.*"

This was irresistible. A hardened sinner could meet an earthquake; he could meet death itself; but he could not withstand the mighty, melting power of love. The hardest heart must yield to the moral influence of love. "Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came *trembling*, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Love can break the hardest heart. And surely there was love in those words, "Do thyself no harm," coming from the lips of one to whom he had done so much harm, a few hours before.

And be it noted, there was not a single syllable of reproach, or even of reflection, uttered by Paul to the jailor. This was Christ-like. It was the way of divine grace. If we look through the gospels, we never find the Lord casting reproach upon the sinner. He has tears of sorrow; He has touching words of grace and tenderness; but no reproaches—no reflections—no reproof to the poor distressed sinner. We cannot attempt to furnish the many illustrations and proofs of this assertion; but the reader has only to turn to the gospel story to see its truth. Look at the prodigal—look at the thief. Not one reproving word to either.

Thus it is in every case; and thus it was with the Spirit in Paul. Not a word about the harsh treatment—the thrusting into the inner prison—not a word about the stocks. "Do thyself no harm." And then, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."

Such is the rich and precious grace of God. It shines,

in this scene, with uncommon lustre. It delights in taking up hardened sinners, melting and subduing their hard hearts, and leading them into the sunlight of a full salvation; and all this in a style peculiar to itself. Yes, God has His style of doing things, blessed be His name; and when He saves a wretched sinner, He does it after such a fashion as fully proves that His whole heart is in the work. It is His joy to save a sinner—even the very chief; and He does it in a way worthy of Himself.

And now, let us look at the fruit of all this. The jailor's conversion was most unmistakable. Saved from the very brink of hell, he was brought into the very atmosphere of heaven. Preserved from self-destruction, he was brought into the circle of God's salvation; and the evidences of this were as clear as could be desired. "And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house." This clearly defines the extent of the term "house" in this passage. They spake, of course, to those who could understand and believe what was said. "And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, *believing in God with all his house.*

What a marvellous change! The ruthless jailor has become the generous host! "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away: behold, all things are become new." How clearly we can now see that Paul was right in not availing himself of the opening of *providence!* How much better and higher to wait for an opening of *grace!* What an eternal loss it would have proved to him had he walked out at the open door! How much better to be conducted out by the very hand that had thrust him in—a hand once the instrument of cruelty and sin, now the instrument of righteousness and love! What a magnificent triumph! What a scene altogether! How

little had the devil anticipated such a result from the imprisonment of the Lord's servants! He was thoroughly outwitted. The tables were completely turned upon him. He thought to hinder the gospel, and behold, he was made to help it on. He had hoped to get rid of two of Christ's servants, and lo, he lost one of his own. Christ is stronger than Satan; and all who put their trust in Him and move in the current of His thoughts shall, most assuredly, share in *the triumphs of His grace now, and shine in the brightness* of His glory for ever.

Thus much, then, as to "the work of an evangelist." Such are the scenes through which he may have to pass—such the cases with which he may have to come in contact. We have seen the earnest seeker satisfied; the false professor silenced; the hardened sinner saved. May all who go forth with the gospel of the grace of God know how to deal with the various types of character that may cross their path! May many be raised up to do the work of an evangelist!

GOD GIVING UP HIS SON: WHAT IS IT?

"HEREIN is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." With this and kindred passages many in these days are familiar; and by such simple statements of God's word many a soul has been cheered, and been sent forward on its way rejoicing in the consciousness of a love never before known, *or invigorated for further service after tasting afresh of its* sweetness.

There are three aspects in which this wonderful subject may be viewed. God's act in giving His Son for us; the Son's act of obedience unto death, though a voluntary sur-

render on His part; and the result of that death as it concerns us—propitiation for our sins. We say, "as it concerns us," because there are results of that death to be taken into account quite apart from its beneficial aspect towards us. God has been glorified by that death of His Son on the cross. (John xiii. 31.) Love from the Father has flowed out to the Son, and exaltation has been decreed for Him, who stooped so low. (John x. 17; Phil. ii. 6—11.) With the beneficial character of the sacrifice of Christ many of our readers are surely familiar. Some, too, well know and gladly own the place of honour now given Him who came to do God's will. But perhaps the third aspect, God giving His Son for us, what that was to Him, is not so frequently thought of. To this, therefore, we would direct the reader's attention for a little—requesting him to turn back, in the pages of the word, to a transaction which took place on Mount Moriah centuries before the temple was built, and nearly two thousand years before the wonderful proof of God's love to sinners was manifested on the cross.

"And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am." (Gen. xxii. 1.) Since the day that Isaac was weaned, and Ishmael turned out of the patriarch's encampment, no communication that we read of had been vouchsafed by God to him. What would God now speak to him about? He had received the promised heir in whom his seed should be called. He saw him growing up the child of his old age—a figure of resurrection. All that he looked for was bound up with the existence of Isaac; and that rightly so, according to the divine word. He enjoyed in his son all that he was taught he could receive of the promised blessings on earth; for his seed must be sojourners in a land not their own, four hundred years, before the country in which he pitched his tent could be parcelled out among his descendants.

Now God speaks to him—breaks a long silence—not, as often before, to promise something fresh, but to ask something from His servant. "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." What a word for the father was this! "Thy son, thine only son Isaac"—the long waited for heir, the promised seed, his only son. And not only was he reminded of the lad's relationship to him, but the affection of his heart must surely have been deeply stirred, as he heard the words, "whom thou lovest." Every word must have added poignance to his sorrow. All that Isaac was is thus recalled to him, when asked to surrender him as a burnt offering. Such a trial none had undergone before. It was something new, which none had heard of before Abraham's day. Abraham, however, did not hesitate. Isaac was all that to him; but if God claimed him as a sacrifice, he would not withhold him. So we read, "And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him." He did not delay till noon, or procrastinate till it was too late to start. He rose early, got everything ready, and started forth on his journey. How beautiful was his obedience! nothing was allowed to interfere with the fulfilment of the command, so on the third day they approached the spot. Again, we read how perfect was his obedience; for, leaving his young man with the ass, "he took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together." Nothing was forgotten; the wood, the fire, the knife, the three requisites besides the victim Abraham carefully provided. They reached the spot, and the last proof of his obedience was offered. "He bound Isaac his son, and laid him on th

altar upon the wood. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son;" for God never enjoined the burning of a living victim, that was a parody on the original idea of a burnt offering, which men were instigated by the enemy to practice.

At this instant a further communication from God is made. "And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him; for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me." The trial was over, the proof of his obedience was complete, and the lad was spared. A substitute of God's providing in Isaac's place, and Abraham received his son as from the dead. God took knowledge of his servant's act, and was satisfied. But after all, had Abraham refused to surrender his son, he would have sinned. In thus complying with God's command he only discharged a duty, a trying duty surely, but still his duty. God had a right to demand the child, and Abraham had no right to refuse him. Could he have looked for a reward for doing his duty? Impossible. Was it not enough that Isaac was spared? Could he have solicited a favour for being obedient? God, he learned, was satisfied with his obedience, must he not have been satisfied with the substitution for his son?

Here however something more comes out. God teaches him and us also what substitution is. He would also give him to know He was satisfied with his obedience, and He would have him and us to know what He thinks of such an act as the giving up to death of a son, an only son. So again the angel speaks, "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the

sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice." No earthly blessing was too great for him who had done this thing. Thrice in this short account have we the words of God, "Thy son, thine only son." The yielding him up was in God's eyes, though an act of obedience, of such value that He would heap favours upon him. He would shew, by what He had sworn to give him, what He thought of this act.

Here then we have an indication of what the giving up of an only son is in God's eyes. This history of Abraham brings it out—the word of the angel sets it forth. And if the act of Abraham, which it would have been sin to have refused, called forth such manifestations on God's part of what He thought of it, what must the giving up His Son, His only Son—an act of pure grace—be in His eyes?

Reader, have you ever regarded the history of Abraham's offering up his son in this light—that here in a figure we have, beforehand, expressed what the giving up *His* only Son is in His estimation? Have you ever considered how great an act of surrender it was? and the fearful ingratitude of which those are guilty who despise the gift, and slight the proof of God's unvarying love?

"O wondrous hour! when, Jesus, thou,
Co-equal with the eternal God,
Beneath our sins vouchsafed to bow,
And in our nature bore the rod.

On thee, the Father's blessed Son,
Jehovah's utmost anger fell;
That all was borne, that all is done,
Thine agony, thy cross, can tell.

Thy cross! thy cross! 'tis there we see
What thou, beloved Saviour, art;
There all the love that dwells in thee
Was labouring in thy breaking heart.

SHORT PAPERS ON CHURCH HISTORY;

&c., &c., &c.

THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY GHOST.

The time was now fully come. Redemption was finished —God was glorified—Christ at His right hand in heaven, and the Holy Ghost come down to earth. God inaugurates the Church; and this He does in a way suitable to His own wisdom, power, and glory. A mighty miracle is wrought, an outward sign is given. The great event is thus recorded.

Acts ii. "*And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*" It may be well here to pause for a moment, and note a few things connected with the descent of the Holy Ghost and the display of His power on this important day.

There was, in the first place, the accomplishment of the Father's promise; the Holy Ghost Himself was sent down from heaven. This was the great truth of Pentecost. He came from above to dwell in the Church—the place prepared for Him, by the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. There was also the fulfilment of the word of the Lord to the apostles, "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." Not that the disciples then knew the meaning of this word, but the fact was now accomplished. The full revelation of the doctrine of the "one body" awaited the ministrations of Paul; as he elsewhere says, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into

one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." 1 Cor. xii.

But further, besides the various gifts dispensed for the work of the Lord, we have something most blessedly personal, and quite new on the earth. The Holy Ghost Himself came down to dwell, not in the Church only, but also in each individual who believed in the Lord Jesus. And, thank the Lord, this most blessed fact is as true to-day as it was then. He dwells now in every believer who rests on the finished work of Christ. The Lord had said, looking forward to this day, "For he dwelleth *with* you, and shall be *in* you." These two grand aspects of the Spirit's presence were fully accomplished on the day of Pentecost. He came to dwell in each Christian and in the Church. And now, blessed truth, we know that God is not only *for* us, but *in* us, and *with* us.

When "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power," He appeared in the form of a dove —beautiful emblem of the immaculate purity—the meekness and lowliness of Jesus. He was not to make His voice heard in the streets, nor break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. But in the case of the disciples who were waiting at Jerusalem, it was altogether different. He descended on them in cloven tongues—tongues of fire, and sat upon each of them. This was characteristic. It was the power of God in testimony—a testimony that was to go forth, not only to all Israel, but to all the nations of the earth. The word of God was also to *judge* all that came before it—it was as *tongues of fire*. God's judgment on man because of sin had been judicially expressed in the cross, and now the solemn fact is to be made known, far and wide, by the power of the Holy Ghost. Nevertheless, grace reigns—reigns through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Christ Jesus. Pardon is proclaimed to the guilty, salvation to the lost, peace to the troubled, and rest

to the weary. All that believe are, and ever shall be, blessed *in* and *with* a risen and glorified Christ.

The astonishment and consternation of the Sanhedrim and the Jewish people must have been great indeed, at the re-appearance, in such power, of the followers of the crucified Jesus. They had doubtless concluded, that as the Master was now gone, the disciples could do nothing of themselves. For the most part, they were plain, uneducated men. But what must have been their amazement, when they heard that these plain men were preaching boldly in the streets of Jerusalem, and making converts by thousands to the religion of Jesus. Even historically viewed, the scene is full of the most thrilling interest, and has no parallel in the annals of time.

Jesus had been crucified; His claims to be the Messiah, in popular estimation, had been buried in His grave. The soldiers, who guarded His sepulchre, had been bribed to spread a false report as to His resurrection; the popular excitement had no doubt passed away, and the city, and temple worship, had returned to their former course, as if no great event had taken place. But on God's part, things were not to be thus quietly passed over. He was awaiting the appointed time to vindicate His Son, and to vindicate Him in the very scene of His humiliation. This took place early in the morning on the day of Pentecost. Suddenly, and unexpectedly, His scattered followers re-appeared in miraculous power. They boldly charged the rulers and the people with the guilt of His apprehension, trial, an crucifixion—that they had killed their own Messiah; bu that God had raised Him up, to be a Prince and a Saviour and to set Him at His own right hand in heaven. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."*

The sentence of Babel, we may also say, was reversed

* For fuller details, historically given, see "History of Christianity, by Dean Milman," vol. i.

on that wonderful day. In the different languages to which man had been doomed, in God's just displeasure, salvation is proclaimed. This mighty, marvellous work of God attracts the multitude. They are amazed, and speculate, as to this strange thing. Each one, in the language of the country from whence he came, hears from the lips of poor Galileans, the wonderful works of God. The Jews who dwelt at Jerusalem, not understanding these foreign languages, mocked. Then Peter stood up, and declared to them in their own tongue, and proved from their own scriptures, the true character of what had taken place.

PETER'S FIRST APPEAL TO THE JEWS.

Thus we read: "And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of *every nation* under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judæa, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God. And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this? Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine. But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judæa, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day:" or, as we would reckon, nine in the morning—the hour of prayer in the temple.

Thus Peter takes the lead, and explains to the Jews, that the wonderful things they had seen and heard that morning, were not the result of excitement, but rather that which ought to have been looked for according to their own prophetic scriptures. "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel." But mark the *ground* on which Peter stands and preaches with such boldness. He stands on the ground of the *resurrection* and *exaltation* of Christ. This is carefully to be noted, as shewing the foundation on which the Church rests, and when and where her history commences. This was the first day of her existence, the first page of her history, and the first triumphs of God's ineffable gift to man. "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

We quote the words of another, on the blessed effects of Peter's first sermon, and of the presence of the Holy Ghost on the earth.

"It was not merely a moral change, but a power which set aside all the motives which individualized those who had received it, by uniting them as one soul, and in one mind. They continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine, they were in communion with each other, they broke bread, they spent their time in prayer, the sense of God's presence was powerful among them; and many signs and wonders were wrought by the hands of the apostles. They were united in the closest bonds; no man calling anything his own, but all divided their possessions with those that

needed. They were daily in the temple, the public resort of Israel for religious exercises, whilst having their own apart, breaking bread at home daily. They ate with joy and gladness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people around them. Thus the assembly was formed, and the Lord added daily to it the remnant of Israel, who were to be saved from the judgments which should fall on a nation which had rejected the Son of God, their Messiah. God brought into the assembly—thus owned of Him by the presence of the Holy Ghost—those whom He spared in Israel. A new order of things had commenced, marked by the presence of the Holy Ghost. Here was found the presence and the house of God, although the old order of things still existed until the execution of the judgment.

"The assembly was formed, therefore, by the power of the Holy Ghost come down from heaven, on the testimony that Jesus, who had been rejected, was raised up to heaven; being made of God both Lord and Christ. It was composed of the Jewish remnant who were to be spared, with the reserve of bringing in Gentiles whenever God should call them."*

This, then, is the Church of God; a gathering together of those whom God has called to the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of God. Love rules and characterizes the newly formed assembly. The mighty victories which grace achieved on that memorable day fully attested the power of the exalted Lord, and the presence of the Holy Ghost on earth. Three thousand souls were converted through one sermon. Those who had been the avowed enemies of the Lord, and who had participated in the guilt of His murder, agonized under the power of Peter's word. Alarmed at the awful thought of having killed their own Messiah, and that God, in whose presence

* "Synopsis of the Books of the Bible," vol. iv. p. 8.

they now were, had exalted Him to His own right hand in heaven, they cry out, "*Men and brethren, what shall we do?*" The Lord, in a certain sense, had sent the rod of His strength out of Zion, He was ruling in the midst of His enemies, and His people were made willing in the day of His power. Psalm cx.

Peter now seeks to deepen the good work in their souls—He seeks to humble the once proud and scornful Jews. "Repent," he says, "and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." He does not say simply, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved." Though, of course, faith and repentance must go together wherever the work is genuine. But Peter, in this case, presses repentance. Their guilt had been great, and a deep moral work in the conscience was needful for their humbling. They must see their guilt in the sight of God, and receive the remission of their sins at the feet of Him whom they had rejected and crucified. Nevertheless, all was grace. Their hearts were touched. They sided with God against themselves—they truly repented, were pardoned, and received the gift of the Holy Ghost. Now they are the children of God and have eternal life: the Holy Ghost dwelt in them. The reality of the change was made manifest by a complete change of character. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."

Baptism, on the confession of faith; reception into the assembly; the Lord's supper; the fellowship of saints, and prayer; were their distinguishing observances. For the moment, the Lord's prayer, "that they all may be one," was answered, as we read in the fourth chapter, "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of

one soul: neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common." We will now turn, for the sake of connection, to the tenth chapter.

THE CALLING IN OF THE GENTILES.

Cornelius, the centurion, a devout man, and those that were with him, are now received into the assembly of God. Peter had proclaimed their call in his first discourse. He is now summoned of God in a special way, and with special indications of His purpose, to open the door to those God-fearing Gentiles. Up to this time, the assembly consisted chiefly, if not solely, of Jews. But God dealt tenderly with His ancient people, considering their national prejudices. "Cornelius was a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway." They could have no objection, personally, to receive such an one. Thus God is gracious, tender, and merciful. But no doubt was left on Peter's mind as to the divine will. God graciously silenced his reasonings, and overcame his unwillingness, with the mild reproof, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common."

Peter now proceeds, though slowly; it was a new kind of work for him. But nothing seems more surprising to Peter, than that the Gentiles should be brought into blessing, without either becoming Jews, or submitting to any Jewish ordinances. This, to Peter, to the Gentiles, and in itself, was an immense step. It strikes at the very root of Popery, Puseyism, Apostolic Succession, and every system of ordinances. In this fact a flood of light is shed on the character of the present dispensation. "Then Peter opened his mouth and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is ac-

cepted of him." Clearly, it was no longer necessary to become a Jew, or submit to external rites and ceremonies, in order to enjoy the richest blessings of heaven. Without the imposition of apostolic hands—though Peter himself, in divine power and authority was present—and before being baptized with water, they were baptized with the Holy Ghost. While the word of God was falling from Peter's lips, the Holy Ghost fell on all who heard it. Before this, however, a blessed work, through God's grace, had been going on in the heart of Cornelius: he was a divinely quickened soul.

The *quickening* operations of the Spirit are quite distinct from being *sealed with* the Spirit. Before the Holy Ghost *can* seal, there must be something for Him *to* seal. He cannot seal our old nature; there must be a new nature for Him to seal—so that there must be a moment in every Christian's history, when he is quickened and not sealed; but sooner or later the work will be completed. (Eph. i. 13.) For example, the prodigal son was quickened, or converted, when he left the far country, but he was a stranger to the Father's love and grace; and, consequently, had not yet the faith that calmly rests in Him as the source of all blessing. He was legal and unbelieving, though quickened. Certainly he was not sealed, or at rest, as to his pardon and acceptance, until he received the kiss of reconciliation, or, as some would say, the *ring*. The gospel idea of *believing* is more than concern for the soul, however real. Christ-dishonouring unbelief may accompany, for a while, a genuine work of God's Spirit in the soul. The prodigal had a certain belief, that there was something good in his Father's heart, therefore he ventures to draw near. But surely this is short of the gospel idea of faith. "He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true." This is faith; and wherever there is this faith, there is the seal of God. Paul himself was at least three days in the

deepest exercise of soul, without the peace and rest which the sealing of the Holy Spirit gives. "And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink." (Acts ix.) But we return to the main point before us.

WATCHING FOR THE MORNING.

"I AM watching for the morning,
The night is long and dreary;
I have waited for the dawning,
Till I am sad and weary;
I am watching for the morning,
When the sons of God shall shew
All their beautiful adorning,
So dimly seen below.

I'm a stranger and a sojourner,
A pilgrim on the earth;
A sick and lonely mourner,
Few own my noble birth:
But I am watching for the morning;
Oh! when will morning come,
And I change the world's rude scorning
For the fellowship of home?

They call me strange and gloomy,
But oh! they little dream
Of the hopes that fill my bosom,
For I am not what I seem.
I am watching for the morning,
When He who for me died,
In triumphant state returning,
Shall claim the Church—His bride.

I will get me to the mountain,
Till the shadows flee away;
I will ask of all the watchmen
For the tokens of the day.
I am watching for the morning—
The night is almost gone;
I hear their note of warning,
I will hie me to my home."

CORRESPONDENCE.

36. "A Sunday School Teacher." You must act before the Lord. No one can, or ought to, interfere with conscience in anything.

37. "H. B. G.," Berks. We do not see how a man can be "safe" unless he is "saved." It seems to us a distinction without a difference. We can understand a person's being safe or saved without knowing it, or having the comfort of it; but you say, "I do not allude to one's own apprehension of salvation." Again, if a person has "life" he must have "salvation." We cannot see the value of such distinctions. As to repentance, it most certainly ought to be preached. Did not Paul preach it? And if he preached it, why should we omit it?

38. "S. T. R.," Norfolk. The life of faith is a holy mystery. Let nothing induce you to take yourself out of the place of entire dependence upon the living God. He may see fit to try your faith; but in the end all will be victory.

39. "Delta," Carrick-on-Shannon. It is entirely a question for individual conscience. We do not feel it to be our business to lay down rules for christian conduct. Where scripture is silent we have no right to speak. If you can engage in the business you name, with a good conscience before God, then "go in peace."

40. "J. W. M.," London. Procure a little tract entitled "Hints and Suggestions as to the Lord's Supper, and those who partake of it." To be had of Mr. Morrish, 24, Warwick Lane, Paternoster Row.

41. "H. D. A.," Southsea. In order to give an opinion in the case you name, we should know both sides of the question; and even though we were made acquainted with all the facts, we could not introduce such matters into our pages.

42. "W. T.," Tamworth. We do not consider that there is "a typically mediatorial thought" in 1 Kings viii. 30. We believe that Daniel (chap. vi. 10) was carrying out the principle contained in Solomon's words, when he opened his window and prayed toward Jerusalem. It was faith owning God's centre, when all seemed lost and gone. Unbelief might say, "Of what possible use can it be to pray toward a city in ruins, and a temple burnt to

the ground?" Faith's answer is very simple. Jerusalem is God's centre for Israel's twelve tribes; and though, for the present, it is set aside, yet faith always acts on the unchangeable word of God. There is something very fine and very instructive in Daniel's conduct. He not merely held truth in the back of his head, as we say, but carried it out, practically, in the face of the lions' den. He might have closed his windows, and drawn the curtains, and prayed in secret, and spared himself. But no: his prayer was governed by the truth of God. The dust of Jerusalem was precious to God, and it was precious to Daniel also. God will yet gather His people Israel around that grand earthly centre. Jerusalem shall yet shine forth in splendour and brightness, and the house of the Lord shall be there in greater glory than ever.

43. "E. M.," Clifton. There are three distinct classes spoken of in the New Testament, namely, "the Jew, the Gentile, and the Church of God." Now each class has its own special sphere of blessing—all, most surely, founded on the atoning death of Christ—the *only* possible channel of blessing to any one. The Jew will have his place; and the Gentile will have his. While, in the Church of God, there is neither Jew nor Greek, but Christ all and in all.

44. "A Distressed One," London. Your case interests us deeply. We do not think that Hebrews x. 26—29 refers to one in your state of soul. What you really want is to see yourself a thorough bankrupt in everything, and to find your all in Christ. You have not, as yet, fully accepted the verdict of God against yourself. This is a great point in the soul's history. You are occupied with yourself, and so long as this is the case, you must be miserable. You will never get anything good in yourself. Your works, your feelings, your experiences—everything, in short, of your own must be let go. God wants you to find your rest and satisfaction where He finds His, and that is in Christ; "who of God is *made unto us* wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." 1 Corinthians i. 30.

45. "G. R.," London. Thanks for the leaflets.

46. "R. G.," Gateshead. Such questions do not fall in with the character of this Magazine. We are determined, by the grace of God, to avoid all such, and to confine ourselves to the work to which we feel God has called us. Questions bearing on the real need of souls, the spread of truth, and the progress of the Lord's work, shall, we trust, ever receive our attention. As to all other matters, it is

useless for any one to trouble us with them, as we shall most surely leave them unnoticed.

47. "J. P.," Berks. We have no sympathy whatever with your friend's objection to that charming little hymn, "Around the throne of God in heaven," &c. It seems he objects specially to the expression, "*Singing*, glory," &c. But might not the same objection be urged against the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, in Luke xvi.? There we read of one lifting up his *eyes* and *seeing* Abraham afar off and Lazarus in his *bosom;* and, moreover, we are permitted to listen to a conversation between the rich man and Abraham, in which the former begs that Lazarus may be allowed to dip the tip of his *finger* in water and cool his *tongue*. If all this be tried by the rigid literality which your friend has brought to bear upon our dear little Sunday School hymn, a number of questions might be raised. The fact is, dear friend, there is a largeness, a simplicity, an unshackled freedom in the way of the Spirit of God in scripture, very far removed from the narrowness and hair-splitting of which, alas! one sees so much just now. Look at Revelation vi. 9, 10, and what do you find? "The *souls* of them that were slain," &c. And what are you told concerning them? That "*they cried with a loud voice*." Is there not as much ground for objecting to "souls" crying, as to the children "singing?" It is all right enough to be jealous for the truth of God; but oh! may the good Lord preserve us from the desire to make people offenders for a word, and to find heresy in mere expressions where nothing but edification is really sought or intended. As regards the sweet little hymn to which your friend has objected, we can only say we have sung it scores of times, and hope to sing it again. May the Lord bless you in your Sunday School work! Let nothing, we beseech you, damp your ardour therein. It is a most blessed work; but it needs largeness of heart and breadth of mind to succeed in it.

48. "S.," East Lothian. Not yet.

49. "L. H.," Bristol. Thanks for the lines. The doctrine is very sound; but the poetry would hardly pass muster.

50. "E. H. S.," Liverpool. Your note, with the enclosed lines, has come to hand.

THE TWO ALTARS.

(Exod. xx. 24—26.)

"An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen: in all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee."

If aught could enhance the value, or add to the interest of this passage of scripture, it is the context in which it stands. To find such words at the close of Exodus xx. is something which must strike the thoughtful reader. In the opening of this chapter, we find God speaking from the top of Mount Sinai, and laying down the law as to man's duty toward God and his duty toward his neighbour. This law is published amid thunderings, blackness, darkness, and tempest. "Thou shalt do this;" and "thou shalt not do that." Such are the terms in which God speaks from the top of the fiery mount. Thus is He compelled to erect around Himself, and around His rights, certain barriers, in order to keep man off. And, in the same way, has man to be kept from infringing the rights of his fellow.

Thus much as to the opening of Exodus xx. There are no such words here as, "I will come unto thee." Quite the reverse. The word was, "Beware lest thou come unto me." (See Exod. xix. 12, 24.) It was impossible for man to get to God by way of law. The barriers that were placed around that palpable mount were insuperable to man. "By works of law shall no man living be justified." Under the law there is no possible way of access to God. "*Keep off*" is the stern utterance of the entire legal system —the expression of the very spirit and genius of the whole Mosaic economy. Nearness and liberty are unknown under the law, and cannot possibly be enjoyed by any one on legal ground.

Hence, then, we may safely say—and we say it with reverence—Jehovah was not at home on the top of mount

Sinai. It was not natural to Him to surround Himself with barriers. He was, as it were, forced into the position, by the legality of the human heart. Israel had taken upon them to say, "All that the Lord hath spoken *we will do.*" (Exod. xix. 8.) It was this that caused Jehovah to place Himself at a distance in order that man might be tested, and the offence might abound. He had just said to the people, "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and *brought you unto myself.* Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep *my covenant,* then ye shall be *a peculiar treasure* unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine."

To what "covenant" does He here refer? To the covenant made with Abraham—the covenant of grace. There was nothing of man's doing in this covenant. It set forth what God would do for Abraham and his seed—what He would give them, and what He would be to them. It was on the ground of this covenant that Jehovah could say to Israel, "I have brought you unto myself." But the very moment that Israel undertook to say, "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do," we hear the command issued to "set bounds about the mount," that the people might be put at a distance.

However, as we have said, all this was not according to the loving heart of the God of Israel. It did not suit His nature and character to place Himself at a distance from His people. They had compelled Him to retire within the narrow enclosures of mount Sinai, and to surround Himself with clouds and darkness, thunderings, lightnings, and tempest. Man had undertaken *to do,* and he must be put to the test. "The law entered that the offence might abound." And again, "By the law is the knowledge of sin."

But it is not our intention, in this short article, to dwell upon the subject of "the law." We have merely referred to it in order to bring out the striking contrast between the opening and the close of Exodus xx. It would seem as

though God were in haste to come down from the top of that dreadful mountain in order to meet man at "an altar of earth"—the place of grace—the place where man's doings are displaced by God's. "An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen: in all places where I record my name, *I will come unto thee*, and *I will bless thee*."

What a contrast! It is as though He had said to them, "You cannot come to me, if I remain on the top of this mountain; but I will come unto you. If I remain here, I must curse you; but I will meet you at an altar of earth and bless you." Blessed be His Name, He delights not in cursing; and hence He would not record His Name on Mount Sinai, the place of distance, and darkness, where He could not come unto His people and bless them.

How blessedly all this tells out what God is! This teaching about the altar is like a ray of divine light piercing through the gloom which surrounded Mount Sinai, and shining on the spot where God would record His Name, and where He could meet His people in all the fulness of blessing.

And let the reader note the character of the offerings referred to in verse 24. We have "burnt offerings and peace offerings." Not a word about sin offerings and trespass offerings. Why is this? Surely this is the very place in which we should expect to find these latter introduced. But no. We have the burnt offering—the type of Christ surrendering Himself, in life and in death, to do the will of God; and we have the peace offering—the type of Christ as the object on which the worshipper feeds in communion with God. And not a word about the sin offering or trespass offering. Why? Is it that these are not needed? Far be the thought! They lie at the very foundation of that altar where God and the worshipper meet. The sin offering is the type of Christ bearing the judgment of God against *sin*. The trespass offering is the type of Christ

bearing *our sins* in His own body on the tree. These, we repeat, form the foundation of all worship. But they are omitted in Exodus xx. 24, because we have here the nature and character of the worship in which God delights—a worship in which the soul is occupied with Christ, in the very highest aspect of His Person and work; for this is what we have in the burnt offering, wherein Christ is seen making atonement, not merely according to our need, but according to the claims of God—not merely according to the measure of the hatefulness of sin, but according to the measure of the preciousness of Christ to the heart of God.

What a striking contrast, then, between the opening and closing lines of Exodus xx.! What lessons are here for our hearts! What a rebuke to all our legal tendencies! We are all prone to be occupied with *our doings*, in some shape or form. Legality is natural to our hearts; and, let us remember, it was this that forced Jehovah—to speak after the manner of men—to take up the position in which we find Him in Exodus xix. and xx. Abraham did not know God in such a position. It was not as a lawgiver that God revealed Himself to the father of the faithful; but as a God of grace, as a God of promise. There were no thunderings and lightnings, no blackness, darkness, and tempest, surrounding the Blessed One when He appeared unto Abraham in Ur of the Chaldees; nor yet when He partook of his hospitality in the plains of Mamre. It was ever God's delight to have His people near Him, enjoying the precious fruits of *His grace*, and not afar off, reaping the bitter fruits of *their works*. This latter was simply the result of man's legal utterance, "All that the Lord hath spoken *we will do*." Up to the fatal moment in the which these words were spoken, God had been speaking and acting in the same unqualified grace toward the seed of Abraham, as He had toward that favoured patriarch himself. But when once Israel undertook *to do*, it was needful to put them thoroughly to the test; and this was done by the law.

But, it may be asked, was it not always God's purpose to give the law? Was it not necessary? Is it not designed to be the abiding rule of man's conduct—the statement of his duty to God and man—the divine summary and embodiment of his righteousness? To all this we reply, Most surely God knew from the beginning what He would do; and moreover, He, in His infinite wisdom, overruled man's legal folly, and made use of the law to raise the great question of righteousness, and prove whether it was possible for man to work out a righteousness which could be accepted. But what was the result? Did man ever get righteousness by keeping the ten commandments? Never. "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight, for by law is the knowledge of sin." (Rom. iii. 20.) And again, "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for the just shall live by faith." Galatians iii. 10, 11.

What, then, was the object of the law? Why was it given? And what was its effect? "The law entered that the offence might abound." (Rom. v. 20.) "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions." (Gal. iii. 19.) "The law worketh wrath." Romans iv. 15.

Thus scripture answers our three questions in the plainest possible manner; and not only so, but it settles the entire law question in such a way as to remove every difficulty and every cloud from the mind that will only submit absolutely to the authority of the word.

However, when we sat down to pen this brief article, we had no thought whatever of entering on the domain of theology. It was merely our purpose to present to the heart and mind of the reader the striking lesson taught by the two altars in Exodus xx.—the altar of earth and the

altar of hewn stone. In the former, we have the very spirit of the dispensation of *grace*; in the latter, the spirit of the dispensation of *law*. God wanted man to be near Him; and therefore He would have an altar of earth. In other words, man was to approach God without any efforts or doings of his own. "If thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone [or, as the margin reads, "*build them with hewing*"]: for if thou lift up *thy tool* upon it, thou hast polluted it. Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon."

Oh! that men would only consider these things! How little are they understood! Man will be *doing*. He will lift up his tool in the building of his altar; and the result is, pollution. He will ascend by steps; and the result is, discovered nakedness. Thus it is, and thus it must be, because man is a sinner, and his very best works can only issue in pollution and nakedness.

But one thing is certain, God does not record His Name in any place where man's doings are set up as the basis of worship. This truth shines with heavenly lustre on every page of the sacred Volume; and it shines where we should least of all have expected to find it; namely, at the close of Exodus xx. It is something perfectly wonderful, amid the thunderings of Mount Sinai, to catch such heavenly accents as these, "In all places where I record my name *I will come unto thee*, and *I will bless thee*." These are words of purest grace—words flowing from the very heart of God—words expressing the very nature and character of God. "I will come unto thee." Precious words! May they sink down into our hearts and there abide! May it be our aim and object ever to be found worshipping in that place where God records His Name, and where, instead of the nakedness and pollution which ever mark the efforts of man, we have the infinite preciousness of the grace of God, and the fulness and excellency of Christ in His Person and work!

A LETTER TO A FRIEND ON THE WORK OF EVANGELIZATION.

April, 1869.

DEAREST A——,

I have been much interested, and, I trust, profited, of late, by tracing, through the Gospels and the Acts, the various notices of the work of evangelization; and it has occurred to me that it may not be amiss to present to you, as one much occupied in the blessed work, a few of the thoughts that have suggested themselves to my mind. I shall feel myself much more free, in this way, than if I were writing a formal treatise.

And, first of all, I have been greatly struck with the simplicity with which the work of evangelizing was carried on in primitive times; so very unlike a great deal of what obtains amongst us. It seems to me that we moderns are quite too much hampered by conventional rules—too much fettered by the habits of Christendom. We are sadly deficient in what I may call spiritual elasticity. We are apt to think that in order to evangelize, there must be a special gift; and even where there is this special gift, there must be a great deal of machinery and human arrangement. When we speak of doing the work of an evangelist, we, for the most part, have before our minds great public halls, and crowded audiences, for which there is a demand for considerable gift and power of speaking.

Now you and I thoroughly believe that in order to preach the gospel publicly, there must be a special gift from the Head of the Church; and, moreover, we believe, according to Ephesians iv. 11, that Christ has given, and does still give, "evangelists." This is clear, if we are to be guided by scripture. But I find in the Gospels, and in the Acts of the Apostles, that a quantity of most blessed evangelistic work was done by persons who were not specially gifted at

all, but who had an earnest love for souls and a deep sense of the preciousness of Christ and His salvation. And what is more, I find in those who were specially gifted, called, and appointed by Christ to preach the gospel, a simplicity, freedom, and naturalness in their mode of working, which I greatly covet for myself and for all my brethren.

Let us look a little into Scripture. Take that lovely scene in John i. 36—45. John pours out his heart in testimony to Jesus, "Behold the Lamb of God!" His soul was absorbed with the glorious object. What was the result? "Two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus." What then? "One of the two which heard John speak and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother." And what does he do? "*He first findeth his own brother* Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus." Again, "The day following, Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me . . . . . *Philip findeth Nathanael*, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph . . . . . *come and see.*"

Here, then, dearest A——, is the style of thing for which I earnestly long; this individual work, this laying hold of the first man that comes in our way, this finding one's own brother, and bringing him to Jesus. I do feel we are deficient in this. It is all right enough to gather congregations, and address them, as God gives ability and opportunity. Neither you nor I would pen a single line to detract from the value of such a line of work. By all means, hire rooms, halls, and theatres; put out bills inviting people to come; leave no lawful means untried to spread the gospel. Seek to get at souls as best you can. Far be it from me to cast a damp upon any who are seeking to carry on the work in this public way.

But does it not strike you that we want more of the in-

dividual work? more of the private, earnest, personal dealing with souls? Do you not think that if we had more "Philips," we should have more "Nathanaels?" If we had more "Andrews," we should have more "Simons?" I cannot but believe it. There is amazing power in an earnest personal appeal. Do you not often find that it is after the more formal public preaching is finished, and the close personal work begins, that souls are reached? How is it, then, that there is so little of this latter? Does it not often happen, at our public preachings, that when the formal address is delivered, a hymn sung, and a word of prayer offered, all disperse without any attempt at individual work? I speak not, now, mark you, of the preacher —who cannot possibly reach every case—but of the scores of Christians who have been listening to him. They have seen strangers enter the room, they have sat beside them, they have, it may be, noticed their interest, seen the tear stealing down the cheek; and yet they have let them pass away without a single loving effort to reach them or to follow up the good work.

No doubt it may be said, "It is much better to allow the Spirit of God to follow up His own work. We may do more harm than good. And, besides, people do not like to be spoken to; they will look upon it as an impertinent intrusion, and they will be driven away from the place altogether." There is considerable weight in all this. I fully appreciate it; and I am sure you do likewise, dearest A——. I fear great blunders are committed by injudicious persons intruding upon the sacred privacy of the soul's deep and holy exercises. It needs tact and judgment; in short, it needs direct spiritual guidance to be able to deal with souls; to know whom to speak to, and what to say.

But, allowing all this, as we do, in the fullest possible manner, I think you will agree with me that there is, as a rule, something lacking in connexion with our public preachings. Is there not a want of that deep, personal,

loving interest in souls which will express itself in a thousand ways that act powerfully on the heart? I confess I have often been pained by what has come under my own notice in our preaching-rooms. Strangers come in, and are left to find a seat wherever they can. No one seems to think of them. Christians are there, and they will hardly move to make room for them. No one offers them a Bible or hymn book. And when the preaching is over, they are allowed to go as they came; not a loving word of enquiry as to whether they enjoyed the truth preached; not even a kindly look which might win confidence and invite conversation. On the contrary, there is a chilling reserve amounting almost to repulsiveness.

All this is very sorrowful; and perhaps my dear A—— will tell me I am drawing too highly coloured a picture. Alas! the picture is only too true. And what makes it all the more deplorable is, that one knows as a fact that many persons frequent our preaching-rooms, and lecture halls, in the deepest exercise, and they are only longing to open their hearts to some one who could offer them a little spiritual counsel; but through timidity, reserve, or nervousness, they shrink from making any advance, and have but to retire to their homes and to their bedchambers, lonely and sad, there to weep in solitude, because no man cares for their precious souls. Now I feel persuaded that much of this might be remedied if those Christians who attend the gospel preachings were more *on the look out* for souls: if they would attend, not so much for their own profit, as in order to be co-workers with God, in seeking to bring souls to Jesus. No doubt, it is very refreshing to Christians to hear the gospel fully and faithfully preached. But it would not be the less refreshing because they were intensely interested in the conversion of souls, and in earnest prayer to God in the matter. And besides, it could, in no wise, interfere with their personal enjoyment and profit to cultivate and manifest a lively and loving interest in those

who surround them, and to seek, at the close of the meeting, to help any who may need and desire to be helped. It has a surprising effect upon the preacher, upon the preaching, upon the whole meeting, when the Christians who attend are really entering into, and discharging, their high and holy responsibilities to Christ and to souls. It imparts a certain tone and creates a certain atmosphere which must be felt in order to be understood; but, when once felt, it cannot easily be dispensed with.

But, alas! how often is it otherwise! How cold, how dull, how dispiriting is it at times to see the whole congregation clear out the moment the preaching is over! No loving, lingering groups, gathering round young converts or anxious enquirers. Old experienced Christians have been present, but, instead of pausing with the fond hope that God would graciously use them to speak a word in season to him that is weary, they hasten away as though it were a matter of life and death that they should be home at a certain hour.

Do not suppose, dearest A——, that I wish to lay down rules for my brethren. Far be the thought. I am merely, in the freest possible manner, pouring out the thoughts of my heart to one with whom I have been linked in the work of the gospel for many years. I feel convinced there is a something lacking. It is my firm persuasion that no Christian is in a right condition if he is not seeking, in some way, to bring souls to Christ. And, on the same principle, no assembly of Christians is in a right condition if it be not a thoroughly evangelistic assembly. We should all be on the look out for souls; and then, we may rest assured, we should see soul-stirring results. But if we are satisfied to go on from week to week, month to month, and year to year, without a single leaf stirring, without a single conversion, our state must be truly lamentable.

But I think I hear you saying, "Where is all the scrip-

ture we were to have had? where the many quotations from the Gospels and the Acts?" Well, I have gone on jotting down the thoughts, which have, for some considerable time, occupied my mind; and now, space forbids my going further at present. But if you so desire, I shall write you a second letter on the subject. Meanwhile, may the Lord, by His Spirit, make us more earnest in seeking the salvation of immortal souls, by every legitimate agency. May our hearts be filled with genuine love for precious souls, and then we shall be sure to find ways and means of getting at them!

Ever, believe me, dearest A——,

Your deeply affectionate yokefellow,

* * *

SHORT PAPERS ON CHURCH HISTORY;

&c., &c., &c.

THE SEALING OF THE GENTILES.

NOTICE, then, this important fact connected with the bringing in of the Gentiles—they receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, simply through the preaching of the word. At Jerusalem, the Jews were baptized before they received the Holy Ghost. At Samaria, the Samaritans were not only baptized, but had the apostles' hands laid on them, with prayer, before they received the Holy Ghost. But at Cesarea, without baptism, without the laying on of hands, without prayer, the richest christian blessing was given to the Gentiles; though the *doctrine* of the Church as the body of Christ was not yet revealed.

The grace of God, thus shewn to the Gentiles, at the commencement of the dispensation, has characterized it ever since. We are Gentiles; we are neither Jews nor Samaritans. Therefore, God's ways in grace, and His order of things with the Gentiles, have a special appli-

cation to us. There is no instance recorded by the inspired historians of one being baptized without professing faith in Christ; but if we are to follow the pattern of things at Cesarea, we must look for *sealing* as well as *quickening*—for *peace with God* as well as *faith in Christ* before baptism. The case of Cornelius stands at the very head of our dispensation; it was the first direct expression of grace to the Gentiles; and surely it ought to be a model for Gentile preachers and disciples. When the word of God that was *then* preached to Cornelius is *now* believed, the same effects, as to peace with God, we may rest assured, will follow.

Preaching, *believing*, *sealing*, *baptizing*, is the divine order of things here. God and His word never change; though "*times change*," as men say, and human opinions change, and religious observances change, but the word of God—*never*. Jews, Gentiles, and Samaritans professed faith in Christ before they were baptized. Indeed baptism supposed eternal life *possessed* through faith, not *communicated* by its observance, as Anglican Catholics teach. "Grace is communicated, life is communicated, by sacraments," they say, "and is only effected through these means; irrespective of any exercise of the intellect on the part of the person brought into union. Holy baptism is the means of conferring on the recipient a new and spiritual life."* Such notions, we need scarcely say, are utterly opposed to scripture. *Baptism*, we affirm, *confers nothing*. *Life* is conferred by other means, as the scriptures plainly teach. Conversion, or "being born again," is effected, in all cases without exception, by the Holy Spirit. As we read in 1 Peter, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in *obeying the truth through the Spirit* unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for

* "The Church and the World," pages 178—188.

ever." Here, the truth of the gospel is viewed as the *means*, and the Holy Spirit as the *power*, in conversion. Christ, or God in Christ, is the new object of the soul. It is by the Spirit and truth of God that this blessed change is effected. Those who trust to *water baptism* as the means of effecting it, trust, alas, to a great delusion—a fatal delusion.*

In the case of the Gentiles, now under consideration, even *more* than life was possessed before baptism was administered. *They had the seal of God.* Baptism is the sign of full deliverance and salvation as secured for the believer by the death and resurrection of Christ. Cornelius had life, was a devout man, but he must send for Peter.

* The following brief statements from the fathers of the fourth century, on the subject of baptism, will shew our readers the sources, or the authorities, of much that is said and done in the present day by the ritualists. The *authority* of scripture is entirely set aside. "At Easter, and at Pentecost, and in some places at the Epiphany, the rite of baptism was administered publicly—that is, in the presence of the faithful—to all the converts of the year, excepting those few instances in which it had been expedient to perform the ceremony without delay, or where the timid Christian put it off till the close of life, after the example of Constantine: a practice for a long time condemned in vain by the Clergy. But the fact of the delay shews how deeply the importance and efficacy of the rite were rooted in the christian mind. It was a complete lustration [purifying] of the soul. The Neophyte [new convert] emerged from the waters of baptism in a state of perfect innocence. The Dove—the Holy Spirit—was constantly hovering over the font, and sanctifying the waters to the mysterious ablution of all the sins of the past life. If the soul suffered no subsequent taint, it passed at once to the realms of purity and bliss; that is, the heart was purified the understanding illuminated; the spirit was clothed with immortality.

"Robed in white, emblematic of spotless purity, the candidate

and hear words whereby he would be saved—fully delivered. The Old as well as the New Testament teaches this blessed truth most plainly. Israel, as a typical people, after being brought to God and sheltered by the blood of the lamb in Egypt, were baptized to Moses in the cloud and in the sea. Thus they were *delivered* out of Egypt, and saw the *salvation* of Jehovah. Again, Noah and his family were saved *through* the flood—*not by it*. They left the old world, passed through the waters of death, and landed in a new condition of things altogether. The like figure, or antitype, whereunto even baptism doth also now save us by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Exodus xiv.; 1 Peter iii. 21.

But what was the word, some may enquire, that Peter

approached the baptistery, in the larger churches a separate building. There he uttered the solemn vows which pledged him to his religion. The symbolizing genius of the East added some significant ceremonies. The Catechumen [one in the first stages of christian instruction] turned to the West, the realm of Satan, and thrice renounced his power; he turned to the East, to adore the Sun of Righteousness, and to proclaim his compact with the Lord of life. The mystic trinal number prevailed throughout; the vow was threefold, and thrice pronounced. The baptism was usually by immersion; the stripping off the clothes was emblematic of 'putting off the old man;' but baptism by sprinkling was allowed, according to the exigency of the case. The water itself became, in the vivid language of the Church, the blood of Christ: it was compared, by a fanciful analogy, to the Red Sea: the daring metaphors of some of the fathers might seem to assert a transmutation of its colour.

"Almost all the fathers of this age, Basil, the two Gregories, Ambrose, &c., &c., have treatises on baptism; and vie, as it were, with each other in their praises of its importance and efficacy. Gregory of Nazianzen almost exhausts the copiousness of the Greek language in speaking of baptism." ***Milman's History of Christianity***, vol. iii.

preached, which was accompanied with such remarkable blessing? He preached peace by Jesus Christ, as Lord of all. Christ risen, exalted, and glorified, was the grand object of his testimony. He sums up with these words: "*To him give all the prophets witness, that through hi name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission o, ins.*" The blessing follows. The Jews present were as tonished; but they bow, and own God's goodness to the Gentiles. "*While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then Peter answered, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded that they should be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.*"

We now retrace our steps a little way, and notice some of the leading events, which, in order, precede chapter x.

THE FIRST CHRISTIAN MARTYR.

STEPHEN, the deacon and evangelist, is the first to receive the crown of martyrdom for the name of Jesus. He stands at the head of "the noble army of martyrs." He is perfect as a type—as the *proto-martyr*. Firm and unwavering in his faith; bold and undaunted before his accusers; pointed and faithful in his defence before the Sanhedrim; free from malice in his strongest statements; full of charity towards all men, he seals his testimony with his blood, and falls asleep in Jesus.

In some respects, Stephen resembles the blessed Lord Himself. "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," is like "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit;" and again, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge," resembles "Father, forgive

them, for they know not what they do:" only Stephen does not plead their ignorance.

Already we see that troubles both within and without assail the young assembly. True, the word of God increased, multitudes were converted, and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith. But the Grecians, or Hellenists (Jews of Greek origin), murmured against the Hebrews (natives of Judea), because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. This led to the appointment of seven deacons. (Acts vi.) From their names here given it would appear that the seven chosen were "Grecians"—all from the side of the murmurers; thus the Spirit of God ruled in grace. Stephen was one of the number; and in his case the word of the apostle was exemplified: "Those who have used the office of a deacon well, purchase to themselves a good degree and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus." He was full of faith and power, and did great wonders and miracles among the people. The energy of the Holy Spirit was especially manifested in Stephen.

There were different synagogues in Jerusalem, appropriated to the different races of Jews. It was the synagogue of the Libertines, Cyrenians, &c., that opposed Stephen. But "they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake." Then followed that which has usually been the case with the confessors of Jesus in all ages; unable to answer him, they accuse him before the council. False witnesses are suborned, who swear that they had "heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God; and that Jesus of Nazareth would destroy this place, and change the customs delivered to them by Moses." The case was now before the Sanhedrim — the trial commences. But what must his judges have thought when they saw his face radiant, as the face of an angel?

We have the noble address of Stephen to the heads of

the nation before us. To them, it was convincing, perplexing, overwhelming. Doubtless, it was the testimony of the Holy Ghost to the Jews, from the mouth of Stephen; and all the more humbling to the proud Jews, to hear their doom from the lips of a Hellenist. But the Spirit of God, when unhindered by man's arrangements, works by whomsoever *He* will.

Stephen recapitulates in bold language the chief points in their national history. He refers especially to the history of Joseph and of Moses. The former, their fathers sold to the Gentiles; the latter, they despised as a ruler and a judge. He also charges them with always resisting the Holy Ghost—with always disobeying the law; and now with having been the betrayers and murderers of the *Just One*. Here Christ's faithful witness was interrupted. He was not allowed to finish his address. A picture, too true, of the treatment of martyrs, from that day even until now. The murmurs, the indignation, the fury of the Sanhedrim, were beyond control. "When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth." But in place of pursuing his discourse, he turns in ecstasy of heart to the Lord, and fixes his eyes on heaven—the home and centre of gathering for all his people.

"I see," said Stephen, "the heavens opened." He was full of the Holy Ghost—heaven opens to him, and he sees the Son of man standing there, ready to receive his spirit. "Such, then," as another has said, "is the position of the true believer—heavenly upon the earth—in presence of the world that rejected Christ, the murderous world; the believer, alive in death, sees by the power of the Holy Ghost into heaven, and the Son of man at the right hand of God. Stephen does not say, 'Jesus.' The Spirit characterizes Him as 'the Son of man.' Precious testimony to man! It is not to the glory that he testifies, but to the Son of man in the glory; heaven being open to him. . . . .

As to the object of faith and the position of the believer, this scene is definitively characteristic."*

We have now gone over, with some care, the first section of the Church's history. And we have been the more careful, as church histories, in general, commence at a later period. Most of them begin where scripture ends; at least as to details. None that we have yet seen refer to the sixteenth of Matthew, and few attempt a critical examination of the Acts of the Apostles, which, after all, is the only part of her history which commands our faith, and has an absolute claim upon our obedience.

In the eighth chapter, we find the Holy Ghost in Samaria working by Philip. He has, as it were, left Jerusalem. This marks a distinct epoch in the history of the Church; and especially in her connection with Jerusalem. We leave, for the present, the enraged and persecuting Jews, and follow the path of the Spirit to the city of Samaria. But we must glance for a moment at what some have called the *third persecution*.

"Foremost and nearest to His throne,
By perfect robes of triumph known,
And likest Him in look and tone,
The holy Stephen kneels,
With stedfast gaze, as when the sky
Flew open to his fainting eye,
Which like a fading lamp flashed high,
Seeing what death conceals.

He, though he seem on earth to move,
Must glide in air like gentle dove,
From yon unclouded depths above
Must draw his purer breath:
Till men behold his angel face
All radiant with celestial grace,
Martyr all o'er, and meet to trace
The lines of Jesus' death."

* "Synopsis of the Books of the Bible," vol. iv.

THE ONLY PLACE OF SAFETY.

WHEN God was about to bring judgment upon the earth He provided a place of safety for those who trusted in Him (Gen. vi. 14—18); so now that "God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness," He has provided full redemption and salvation from the wrath to come for all who believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ. Romans i. 16; iii. 24—26.

In the days of Noah there was but one place of safety, and that was the ark (Gen. vii. 23); and now there is but one way of salvation, and that is CHRIST. There was safety in the ark for whoever was in it; and there *is* salvation in Jesus, that "through his name *whosoever* believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." (Acts x. 43.) None could perish who were in the ark, for "the Lord had shut them in;" so those who are in Christ by faith "shall never perish—shall not come into condemnation, but are passed from death unto life."

Noah believed that the flood was coming, not because he saw any sign of it, for he saw none; but simply because God declared that it should come: "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things *not seen as yet*, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house." When the dreadful judgment came, those who believed God were safe in the ark; those who despised the word of God were overtaken and destroyed in the midst of all their thoughtlessness.

Dear reader, to which of these classes do you belong? Are you now taking refuge by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the true Ark of safety, or are you carelessly enjoying the pleasures of sin? Let me entreat you not to neglect the message of forgiveness through the precious blood of Christ. Take heed that you do not despise this day of His grace, and so the day of His righteous anger come upon you.

RISE, HE CALLETH.

"My heart is bounding onward,"
On to the Lord I love,
The voice of His love hath entered,
And lured my soul above.
"My love, my dove"—He speaketh—
How can my spirit stay,
When words like His have ravished
And borne my heart away!

"My heart is bounding onward,"
It may not linger here,
For the voice of my Beloved
Hath sounded in mine ear.
The spell of earth is broken,
For *He* hath won my heart—
And many a sweet love token
To me He doth impart!

"My heart is bounding onward,"
The glory lies before,
The sound of His footsteps cometh
The mountains of Bether o'er.
O haste Thee, my Beloved,
O haste—make no delay,
For my waiting spirit longeth
For Thine appearing day.

"My heart is bounding onward,"
For Thou hast looked on me,
And kindled an eager yearning
To gaze, my Lord, on Thee.
Oh! Jesus, Well Beloved!
For me Thou hast in store,
A rest upon *Thy* bosom,
A "going out" no more.

E. C. L.

CORRESPONDENCE.

51. "J. G.," Tunbridge Wells. We question if you are not confounding two things which must be distinguished, namely, the actual existence of the Church, in fact, on the day of Pentecost, and the revelation of the mystery, afterwards, by the ministry of Paul. The Church was formed on the day of Pentecost by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, consequent upon the exaltation of Christ, the risen Man, at the right hand of God. There are some who seem to think that the Church had no existence, in fact, until Paul revealed the *doctrine* of the Church. This we consider a grave mistake, and something plainly opposed to the testimony of the word. We read, at the close of the second of Acts, that "the Lord added to *the church* daily such as should be saved." This was before Paul's conversion. The truth is, that accomplished redemption, the exaltation of Christ, and the descent of God the Spirit in His new character as the Witness of Christ's glory, are the grand foundation of the Church. The descent of the Holy Ghost to form the body; and the descent of Christ to receive that body to Himself, are the grand boundaries of the Church's earthly history. Hence, therefore, it would be a serious error to teach that the Church begins with the revelation of the mystery by the ministry of Paul. True, the mystery was committed to him—the uniting of Jew and Gentile into one body; but the Church, as such, began on the day of Pentecost. However we have no doubt but that your difficulties will be fully met by future papers on "Church History." You must have the whole subject before your mind, in the light of Scripture.

52. "Amicus," Holloway. Thanks for the extracts. They are not in our line.

53. "C.," Windsor. We should reply to your first question in the affirmative. As to your second, we believe that the Old Testament saints had eternal life, and therefore could not

be lost. But we do not look upon Saul as a case in point. You must carefully distinguish between saints possessing eternal life, and persons holding office of any kind.

54. "M. F.," Loudwater. You will find your question fully gone into in a series of papers, in volume x. of "Things New and Old," entitled, "The Ministry of Reconciliation."

53. "An Anxious Enquirer." Few things are more solemn than to resist light. Look at that most weighty passage in Jeremiah xiii. "Give glory to the Lord your God, before *he cause darkness*, and before your feet stumble on the dark mountains, and while ye look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness." (Ver. 16.) There is something very awful in the thought of God's causing darkness, and turning light into the shadow of death, because of our not acting on the light when He graciously gave it. The contrast of all this we have in that lovely passage in Luke xi.: "The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness. Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness. If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light." (Ver. 34—36.) Thus, when we act on the light which God gives, we not only are full of light ourselves, but become lightbearers for others. This is very different from stumbling on dark mountains. We do not wonder, dear friend, at the dim twilight of which you speak. The wonder is that it is not profound darkness. It would be so but for infinite grace. But we entreat you not to hesitate a moment longer. "How long halt ye?" "I made haste and delayed not to keep thy commandments." "Let us go forth therefore *unto him*, without the camp, bearing his reproach." Let nothing cause you to linger. "To obey is better than sacrifice, and

to hearken than the fat of rams." It is a fatal mistake to refuse to act on divinely given light, under the plausible pretext of usefulness. Our usefulness consists in doing what our Lord commands. Obedience is our work. May God give you grace to be decided for Christ! May He lead you forth into that blessed sphere in which you can walk with Him, lean on Him, work for Him, and find all your springs in Him! To Him we earnestly commend you.

56. "Arthur." Are you not aware that the act is illegal? Scripture teaches us to obey the powers that be; and to be subject to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake. It is well for Christians to give attention to such wholesome words in days like these, and not to be found indulging themselves at the expense of the enactments of the government under which they live.

57. "J. R.," Diss. Scripture as distinctly teaches man's responsibility, as it teaches God's sovereignty; and our place is to believe both. There is a very great difference between our being occupied with God Himself, and being occupied with the dogmas of theology. These latter often perplex the soul; whereas, when we get into the presence of God, and into the light of His word, all becomes clear and simple. The facts of scripture are one thing; the conclusions of theologians are quite another.

58. "W. G.," Southampton. Controversy is not our province. Of course, we wholly dissent from the statements contained in the "Review" to which you call our attention; but we could not think of entering upon such a subject in our brief notices to Correspondents. The pages of "Things New and Old" have, from the very commencement, taught principles the direct opposite of those contained in the review, which latter we consider subversive of the truth as to the Christian's position and practice. We shall not attempt to put on paper our feelings as to the writer's irreverent allusion to our blessed Lord's life. We consider it perfectly shocking.

THE WORK OF GOD IN THE SOUL.

We have from time to time dwelt a good deal, in the pages of "Things New and Old," upon the work of God *for* us; and, most surely, no theme could possibly be more important or interesting. God's work for us lies at the very foundation of all true practical Christianity and personal religion. The knowledge of what has been accomplished by the atoning death of Christ is essential to the soul's peace and liberty. We cannot too frequently reiterate, or too strongly insist upon the fundamental truth that, "It is the work wrought *for* us, and not the work wrought *in* us, that saves us." Nor should we ever forget that, "Faith is the soul's *outward*, not its inward look."

All this is of the very deepest moment; and the reader may rest assured that nothing is further from our thoughts than to pen a single line which might even tend to lessen its importance. But, as we have observed, this grand and interesting line of truth has been largely unfolded, in all the volumes of this publication; and, therefore, we feel the more free to enter, in this article, upon a subject which ought ever to hold a prominent place in our minds; namely, *The work of God in us.* May God's Spirit guide our thoughts, as we dwell, for a little, upon this theme!

In tracing the work of the Holy Ghost in the soul of a sinner, there are three distinct things to be noticed. In the first place, He creates a need. In the second place, He reveals an object to meet that need. And, in the third place, He enables the soul to lay hold on that object. These are the three stages of the Spirit's work in the soul and nothing can be more interesting than to trace them. No doubt, there are various other branches of the work of the Holy Ghost, but we now confine ourselves to that special branch which bears upon the individual soul in

its passage from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God; and here the first thing we have to notice is

THE NEED CREATED.

This need may develop itself in three ways. In some cases, it takes the form of a deep sense of guilt; in others, a sense of danger; and, in others, a sense of the utter vanity and emptiness of all beneath the sun. Doubtless, in many instances, we may find all three operating.

Let us take an example or two from the pages of inspiration. Look at Peter, by the lake of Gennesaret. (Luke v.) No sooner had a ray of divine light entered his soul, in convicting power, than he exclaims, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." Here we have a sense of guilt—a deep, keen sense of personal sinfulness and unworthiness, the result of a divine operation in the soul of Peter. This is very important. It is well to remember that the question of sin must be raised and settled in the human conscience. Sin is a serious thing in God's judgment, and it must be felt as such in the soul of the sinner. Peter felt he had no right or title to be in the presence of that blessed One whose glory had just shone upon him. He felt himself utterly unfit to be there. He felt that sin and holiness could not be together, any more than light and darkness.

This was a right feeling in Peter; and it is a right feeling in every case. It is always a very good thing to begin with a profound sense of personal guilt. It is well to have the arrow of conviction piercing to the very centre of the soul—well to have the ploughshare breaking up the fallow ground and making a deep furrow in the heart. We invariably find that the steadiest and most solid Christians are those who have, at the first, gone through the deepest waters, and endured the keenest exercises.

We do not, of course, mean to say that the soul's exercises have anything to do with the ground of the soul's

salvation, any more than the feelings of a man in a house on fire have to do with the fire escape by which he descends from the burning pile. But still we believe it is a good thing for the soul to begin with a very clear and full sense of its guilt and ruin—a just apprehension of the judgment of God against sin. The more keenly a man has felt his awful position in the burning house, the more thoroughly will he appreciate the fire escape—the mind that planned it, and the hand that provided it. And so in the case of the sinner; the more he feels his guilt and unworthiness, the more will he prize the precious blood that cancels his guilt, and brings him without spot into the immediate presence of a holy, sin-hating God.

It is to be feared that, in many cases, the work of conviction or repentance is very superficial. It strikes us, too, that at times, in our great anxiety to bring the soul into peace, we interfere with the work of conviction. We go before, in place of following after the Holy Ghost. This is very serious. It is a perilous thing to tamper with God's work in the soul. It is most marvellous grace that deigns to use us; but let us beware of how we run before the Holy Ghost. It is our place to mark His operations, not to mar them. If, for example, we meet a soul under conviction of sin, it may be that the work is not yet complete; it may be only in progress. What should we do? Seek to hasten the individual into a confession of faith in Christ—to extract from him an acknowledgment of peace with God? By no means; to do so would be to damage the precious work of God in the soul. What then should we do? Seek to follow in the wake of the Holy Ghost—to be His instrument in carrying on the work which He has in hand. He will assuredly perfect His own work; and if we are waiting on Him, He will teach us what to do, and how to do it; what to say, and when to say it. If Ananias had gone to Saul one hour before the close of the "three days," he would have gone too soon. Those

days, we may rest assured, were serious days—days which left their impress on the whole of the apostle's after history—days never to be forgotten. We doubt not they were days during which his eyes—closed upon the external world—were turned inward upon himself, and backward upon his ways. And are we not warranted in asserting that it would have been an injudicious, if not an unhallowed intrusion, had Ananias gone to interfere with the deep and holy work which was going on in the soul of that remarkable man? Unquestionably; and so it is in every case. We may depend upon it, that we only injure souls if we attempt to urge them, by *our* work, one hair's breadth beyond the actual point to which the work of God has conducted them.

All true spiritual ministry will tend to deepen in the soul that special character of work which the Holy Ghost is carrying on at the moment. Hence, if we come in contact with one in whom the work of conviction or repentance is in progress, we should not seek, too hastily, to urge the soul into a confession of having found peace. If we aim at being co-workers with God, it will be our place to watch, with earnest prayer and holy diligence, the progress of the divine work—to wait much on God that He may be pleased to use us as His instruments in carrying out the purposes of His grace. This is most blessed work; but it is most solemn, and demands much spirituality, much nearness to Christ, much self-denial. The most serious mistakes are committed by unskilful hands undertaking to deal with cases in which the work of God's Spirit is going on. We must remember that God's work is sometimes very slow; but it is always very sure. We, on the contrary, are often impetuous; and, in our desire to reach speedy results, we may often unduly hasten on the soul to a *professed* position far beyond its actual practical *state*—often urge from the *lips* more than the Holy Ghost has wrought in the *heart*. This is very serious for all who have to deal with souls

But then the grace of God is all-sufficient for every case; and nothing can be more profoundly interesting than to watch the unfoldings of the Spirit's work in the soul—to mark the stages of God's new creation—the establishment and progress of His kingdom in the heart. Far be it from us to inculcate or encourage cold heartless indifference as to precious souls, in their deep and varied spiritual exercises—a species of most miserable fatalism, which, under the plea of leaving souls entirely in the hands of the Holy Ghost, in reality throws off all sense of responsibility. God, in His mercy, forbid that we should lend the smallest countenance to aught of this kind. We deeply feel ourselves responsible to care for souls—we believe all Christians are responsible; and hence arises the need of skill and spiritual tact in dealing with souls, so that we may not, in any wise, retard, but by all means further the blessed work of God's Spirit in them.

But we have been rather digressing from our immediate line, to which we shall now return.

We have stated that the Spirit of God sometimes produces in the soul a sense of danger. He presses upon the heart and conscience the awful reality of the lake of fire, and the worm that never dies. He at times sees fit to draw aside the curtain and reveal what awaits all those who die in their sins. No doubt, the sense of guilt and the sense of danger very frequently go together; but they are distinct exercises, and in very many cases the latter is the more prominent of the two. The soul is filled with horror at the thought of burning for ever and ever in the flames of hell. The Holy Ghost uses this horror in order to make the heart feel its need of Christ.

Many, we are aware, object to the preaching of everlasting punishment, as a means of leading souls to Christ. Not that they deny the truth on this subject; but they question the propriety or usefulness of it. They deem it wiser to dwell only upon the love of God in giving His

Son; and the love of Christ in giving Himself. They judge it better and more effectual to dwell upon the joys and glories of heaven than the woes and horrors of hell. Well, we do not mean, for a moment, to compare the two themes; no intelligent person could think of so doing. But then we must bear in mind that our blessed Lord again and again addressed His hearers on the awful subject of hell fire. Read Matthew v. 22—30. Three times in this brief passage He warns His hearers against the danger of hell.

So also in that most solemn passage at the close of Luke xvi. Who can read this without feeling pressed with the weight and seriousness of the parable? What a presentation of the past, the present, and the future! "Son, *remember*." Here memory is flung back upon the *past*. And what a past! Memory will be terribly active in hell. "But now thou art tormented." Here the lost soul is called to contemplate the *present*. And what a present! Tormented in the flames of hell! But is there no end—no faint hope of cessation? None whatever. "There is a great gulf *fixed*." Here is the *future*. And what a future! Hell is an eternal reality—a fixture. If hell fire be not everlasting, what would be the force of the word "fixed?"

Now, are not the above scriptures quite sufficient to prove that the Holy Ghost uses the truth of everlasting punishment to create a need in the immortal soul? Most surely. And if He does so, should not we? Did not the Apostle Paul reason before Felix, on the subject of judgment to come; and that, too, in such a manner as to make the voluptuary tremble on his throne? Ah! yes; it is a wholesome thing for the soul of a sinner to be impressed with a deep sense of his danger of hell. And when we find a soul so impressed what should we do? Should we not seek to deepen the impression? Would it not be our wisdom to follow up what the Holy Ghost is manifestly doing?

Truly so. To act otherwise would be to hinder instead of furthering the work of God in the soul. The blessed Spirit will teach us the proper moment in the which to present the divine object to meet the need of the exercised soul. The Master will at the right moment issue the command, "Loose him and let him go." God will do His work, and use us therein, if we wait on Him. All we desire, in penning these lines, is to press upon the reader the reality of God's work in the soul, and the necessity of guarding against anything like undue haste in urging souls beyond the measure of the Spirit's operation. We should beware of healing the wound slightly, and of crying Peace, where there is no peace, yea, where there is not even true preparedness for that blessed peace which Jesus has made by the blood of His cross, which God proclaims in His word, and which the heart enjoys by faith, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

(To be continued, if the Lord will.)

SHORT PAPERS ON CHURCH HISTORY;

&c., &c., &c.

CHAPTER III.

THE DISCIPLES PERSECUTED AND SCATTERED.

After the death of Stephen, a great persecution broke out. (Acts viii.) The Jewish leaders appeared to have gained a victory over the disciples, and they determined to pursue their apparent triumph with the utmost violence. But God, who is above all, and who knows how to restrain the rising passions of men, overruled their opposition for the accomplishment of His own will.

Man had not yet learnt the truth of the proverb, that "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church." In the case of the first and the noblest of martyrs, the

proverb was fully verified. But all these eighteen hundred years, men have been slow to learn, or believe, this plain historical fact. Persecution, generally speaking, has advanced the cause which it sought to repress. This will be found true in the main, under every form of opposition and persecution. Resistance, decision, and firmness are created by such treatment. True, timid minds may be driven to apostasy for a time, by persecution; but how often have such, with the deepest repentance, and in order to regain their former position, endured with cheerfulness the greatest sufferings, and displayed in their last moments the greatest fortitude. But persecution, in one form or another, is to be expected by the followers of Jesus. They are exhorted to take up their cross *daily* and follow Him. It tests the sincerity of our faith—the purity of our motives—the strength of our affection for Christ, and the measure of our confidence in Him.

Those who are not true in heart for Christ will be sure to fall away in a time of sharp persecution. But love can *endure* for its object, when it can do nothing else. We see this *perfectly* in the blessed Lord Himself. He *endured* the cross—that was of God; He *despised* the shame—that was of man. It was amidst the shame and sufferings of the cross that the full strength of His love appeared, and that He triumphed over everything. Nothing could turn His love aside from its object; it was stronger than death. In this, as in all things, He has left us an example, that we should walk in His steps. May we ever be found following hard after Him!

From the history of the Church in the Acts, we learn, that the effect of the martyrdom of Stephen was the immediate spread of the truth, which his persecutors were seeking to hinder. The impressions produced by such a witness, and such a death, must have been overwhelming to his enemies, and convincing to the unprejudiced and the thoughtful. The last resort of human cruelty is death:

but, wonderful to say, christian faith, in its first trial, was proved to be stronger than death, and that in its most frightful form. This the enemy witnessed, and would ever after remember. Stephen was on the *Rock*, and the gates of hell could not prevail against him.

The whole Church at Jerusalem, on this occasion, were scattered abroad; but they went everywhere preaching the word. Like the cloud that flies before the wind, bearing its refreshing rain to thirsty lands, so the disciples were driven from Jerusalem by the storm of persecution, bearing the living waters to thirsty souls in distant lands. "And at that time there was a great persecution against the Church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles." Some historians have thought, that the fact of the apostles remaining in Jerusalem, when the disciples fled, proves their greater firmness and faithfulness in the cause of Christ; but we are disposed to judge differently, and to consider it *failure* rather than *faithfulness*. The Lord's commission to them was, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." And they were also told, "When they persecute you in one city, flee into another." As far as scripture history informs us, the commission was never carried out by the twelve. Nevertheless, God was mighty in Paul towards the Gentiles, and in Peter towards the Jews.

The Holy Spirit now leaves Jerusalem, as to outward manifest power—most solemn truth! But that guilty city preferred the patronage of Rome to the resurrection-power of their own Messiah. "What do we?" said the Jews, "for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation." They rejected the Messiah in His humiliation, and now they reject the testimony of the

Holy Spirit to His exaltation. Their iniquity was full, and wrath was coming on them to the uttermost. But, for the present, our happier place, in tracing the history of the Church, is to follow the Holy Spirit on His way to Samaria. His path is the *silver line* of saving grace in precious souls.

THE TRIUMPHS OF THE GOSPEL IN SAMARIA.

Philip, the deacon, evidently next to Stephen in zeal and energy, goes down to Samaria. The Holy Spirit works with him. In the wisdom of the Lord's ways, *despised* Samaria is the first place, outside of Judea, where the gospel was preached by His chosen witnesses. "Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. And there was great joy in that city." A great many believed and were baptized, both men and women. Even Simon Magus, the sorcerer, owned the presence of a power far above his own, and bowed to the force and current of the Spirit's work in others, though the truth had not penetrated his own heart or conscience. But as we have now travelled to another part of the country, this may be the fitting place to say a word as to its history.

The Holy Land, interesting beyond all other nations of the earth, both morally and historically, is in size very small. "It is but a strip of country, about the size of Wales, less than 140 miles in length, and barely 40 in average breadth."* The northern portion is Galilee; the centre, Samaria; the south, Judea. But though *physically* so small, it has been the theatre of the most momentous events in the world's history. There the Saviour was born, lived, and was crucified—and there He was buried and rose again. And there, too, His apostles and martyrs

* Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible.*

lived, testified, and suffered; and there the first gospel sermon was preached, and there the first Church was planted.

The land originally occupied by Israel, lay between the ancient empires of Assyria and Egypt. Hence the frequent reference in the Old Testament to "the king of the North," and "the king of the South." Owing to this position, it was often the battle field of these mighty empires; and we know it will yet be the scene of their last and deadly conflict. (Dan. xi.) So superstitious have men been about the Holy Land, that it has been the object of national ambition, and the occasion of religious wars, almost ever since the days of the apostles. Who could estimate the blood that has been shed, and the treasure that has been wasted, on these sacred plains?—and all, we may add, under the fair name of religious zeal, or rather, under the banners of the cross and the crescent. It has also been the great attraction for travellers of all characters and of all nations. The Christian, the historian, and the antiquarian have searched it diligently, and made known their discoveries. Ever since the days of Abraham, it has been the most interesting and attractive spot on the earth's surface. And to the student of prophecy, its future history is even more interesting than its past. He knows that the day is coming, when the whole land shall be peopled by the twelve tribes of Israel, and filled with the glory and majesty of their Messiah. Then shall they be owned as the metropolitan people of the earth. We now return to Samaria, with its new life and joy.

The Samaritans, through God's blessing, readily believed the gospel, as preached by Philip. The effects of the truth, thus received in simplicity, were immediate and of the most blessed character. "There was great joy in that city," and many were baptized. Such must ever be the effects of the gospel, when believed, unless there be some hindrance in connection with ourselves. Where

there is genuine simplicity of faith, there must be genuine peace and joy, and happy obedience. The power of the gospel, over a people who had for ages resisted the claims of Judaism, was thus displayed. What the law could not do, in this respect, the gospel accomplished. "Samaria was a 'conquest'" as one has said, "which all the energy of Judaism had never been able to make. It was a new and splendid triumph of the gospel. The spiritual subjugation of the world appertained to the Church."

JERUSALEM AND SAMARIA UNITED BY THE GOSPEL.

The bitter jealousy that existed between Jews and Samaritans, had long been proverbial; hence we read "The Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." But now, in connection with the gospel of peace, this root of bitterness disappears. Nevertheless, in the wisdom of God's ways, the Samaritans must wait for the highest blessing of the gospel, until the Jewish believers—the apostles from the Church at Jerusalem—lay their hands on them, and offer up prayer for them. Nothing can be more deeply interesting than this fact, when we take into consideration the religious rivalry that had been so long manifested by both. Had not Samaria received this timely lesson of humility, she might have been disposed, once more, to maintain her proud independency of Jerusalem. But the Lord would not have it so. The Samaritans had believed, rejoiced, and were baptized, but they had not received the Holy Ghost. "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John; who, when they were come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost. Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost."

Identification is the great idea of the laying on of hands, and *unity* is the great idea of the gift of the Holy Ghost. These are immense facts in connection with the progress

of the Church. Samaria is thus brought into happy association with her ancient rival, and made one with the Church at Jerusalem. There is no thought in God's mind of the one assembly being independent of the other. Had they been each blessed separately and independently, their rivalry might have been greater than ever. But it was to be no longer: "Neither on this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem," but *one Head in heaven, one body on earth, one Spirit, one redeemed family, worshipping God in Spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him.**

For the origin of the mixed people and worship of Samaria, see 2 Kings xvii. They were but half Jews, though they boasted of their relation to Jacob. They received the five books of Moses as sacred, but undervalued the rest of the Bible. They were circumcised, kept the law after a sort, and were expecting a Messiah to come. The personal visit of the blessed Lord to Samaria is of the deepest and most touching interest. (John iv.) The well at which He rested, it is said, "lay in a valley between the two famous mountains, Ebal and Gerizim, on which the law was read. On the latter height stood the rival temple of the Samaritans, which had so long afflicted the more zealous Jews by its daring opposition to the one chosen sanctuary on Mount Moriah."

THE ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH RECEIVES THE GOSPEL.

Philip is now called to leave his happy and interesting work at Samaria, and go down to Gaza—a wilderness; and preach the gospel there to a single person. Surely there is a lesson for the evangelist in this fact, of the deepest importance, and one that must not be passed over without a brief notice.

The preacher, in such a scene of awakening and con-

* See Lecture vi., on Acts ii., viii., x., xix. ***Lectures on the New Testament Doctrine of the Holy Spirit.*** **By W. Kelly.**

version as there was at Samaria, necessarily becomes greatly interested in the work. God is setting His seal on the ministry of the word, and sanctioning the meetings with His presence. The work of the Lord prospers. The evangelist is surrounded with respect and affection, and his children in the faith naturally look up to him for further light and instruction as to their path. How can he leave such a field of labour? many will enquire—would it be right to leave it? Only, we reply, if the Lord called His servant to do so, as he did in the case of Philip. But how is he to know *now*, seeing that angels and the Spirit do not speak to him as they did to Philip? Though not spoken to in this way, he ought to look for and expect divine guidance. Faith must be his guide. Circumstances are unsafe as a guide; they may rebuke and correct us in our path, but the eye of God must be our guide. "I will guide thee with mine eye," is the promise; "I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go." Psalm xxxii.

The Lord only knows what is best for His servant and for His work. The evangelist in such a scene would be in danger of feeling his own personal importance. Hence the necessity of changing the place of service.

"Arise," said the angel of the Lord to Philip, "and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went; and, behold a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said to Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot." Acts viii. 26—40.

The immediate and unquestioning obedience of Philip at this time is beautiful. He raises no question as to the difference between Samaria and Gaza—between leaving a wide field of labour, and going away to a desert place, to speak to *one person* about salvation. But the Spirit of

God was with Philip. And the one desire of the evangelist should ever be, to follow the leading of the Spirit. From the want of spiritual discernment, a preacher may remain in a place after the Spirit has ceased to work in it, and so labour in vain.

God, in His providence, takes care of His servant; He sends an angel to direct him as to the road he is to take. But when it is a question of the gospel and dealing with souls, the Spirit takes the direction. "Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot." We know of nothing, in the whole history of the Church, more interesting than this scene on the way to Gaza. The angel and the Spirit of God accompany the evangelist: the former representing the providence of God in marking out the very road he is to take; the latter representing spiritual power in direct dealing with souls. As it was then, so is it now; though we are more in the habit of thinking of the guidance of the Spirit, than of the direction of providence. May we trust God for everything! He changes not.

The gospel now finds its way, in the person of the queen's treasurer, to the centre of Abyssinia. The eunuch believes, is baptized, and goes on his way rejoicing. What he sought for in vain in Jerusalem, and had taken a long journey to seek there, he finds in the desert. Beautiful instance of the grace of the gospel! The lost sheep is found in the wilderness, and living waters spring up in the desert. He is also a beautiful instance of an anxious soul. When alone and unemployed, he reads the prophet Isaiah. He muses on the prophecy of the suffering, unresisting Lamb of God. But the moment of light and deliverance had come. Philip explains the prophet—the eunuch is taught of God—he believes—immediately desires baptism, and returns to his home, filled with the new joys of salvation. Would he be silent there, as to what he had found? Certainly not; a man of such character and influence would have many

opportunities of spreading the truth. But as both scripture and history are silent, as to the results of his mission, we venture not further.

The Spirit is still seen in company with Philip. He carries him far away. He is found at Azotus. He evangelizes all the cities unto Cæsarea.

A new era in the Church's history begins to dawn. A new workman enters the scene, and the most remarkable in many ways that ever served the Lord and His Church.

A SECOND LETTER TO A FRIEND ON THE WORK OF EVANGELIZATION.

May, 1869.

DEAREST A——,

There is one point, in connection with our subject, which has much occupied my mind, and that is the immense importance of cultivating an earnest faith in the presence and action of the Holy Ghost. We want to remember, at all times, that we can do nothing, and that God the Holy Ghost can do all. It holds good in the great work of evangelization, as in all beside, that it is, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." The abiding sense of this would keep us humble, and yet full of joyful confidence. Humble, because we can do nothing; full of joyful confidence, because God can do all. Moreover, it would have the effect of keeping us very sober and quiet in our work—not cold and indifferent, but calm and serious, which is a great matter just now. I was much struck with a remark lately made by an aged workman, in a letter to one who had just entered the field. "Excitement," says this writer, "is not power, but weakness. Earnestness and energy are of God."

This is most true and most valuable. But I like the two sentences taken together. If we were to take either apart,

I think you and I would prefer the latter; and for this reason: there are many, I fear, who would regard as "excitement" what you and I might really consider to be "earnestness and energy." Now, I do confess, I love a deep-toned earnestness in the work. I do not see how a man can be otherwise than deeply and thoroughly in earnest who realizes, in any measure, the awfulness of eternity, and the state of all those who die in their sins. How is it possible for any one to think of an immortal soul standing on the very brink of hell, and in danger, at any moment, of being dashed over, and not be serious and earnest?

But this is not excitement. What I understand by excitement is the working up of mere nature, and the putting forth of such efforts of nature as are designed to work on the natural feelings—all high pressure—all that is merely sensational. This is all worthless. It is evanescent. And not only so, but it superinduces weakness. We never find aught of this in the ministry of our blessed Lord, or His apostles: and yet what earnestness! what untiring energy! what tenderness! We see an earnestness which wore the appearance of being beside oneself; an energy which hardly afforded a moment for rest or refreshment; and a tenderness which could weep over impenitent sinners. All this we see; but no excitement. In a word, all was the fruit of the Eternal Spirit, and all was to the glory of God. Moreover, there was ever that calmness and solemnity which becomes the presence of God, and yet that deep earnestness which proved that man's serious condition was fully realized.

Now, dearest brother, this is precisely what we want, and what we ought diligently to cultivate. It is a signal mercy to be kept from all merely natural excitement; and, at the same time, to be duly impressed with the magnitude and solemnity of the work. Thus the mind will be kept properly balanced, and we shall be preserved from the tendency to be occupied with *our* work, merely because it is

ours. We shall rejoice that Christ is magnified, and souls are saved, whoever be the instrument used.

I have been thinking a good deal lately of that memorable time, now exactly ten years ago, when the Spirit of God wrought so marvellously in the province of Ulster. I think I gathered up some valuable instruction from what then came under my notice. That was a time never to be forgotten by those who were privileged to be eyewitnesses of the magnificent wave of blessing which rolled over the land. But I now refer to it in connection with the subject of the Spirit's action. I have no doubt whatever that the Holy Ghost was grieved and hindered in the year 1859, by man's interference. You remember, dearest A., how that work began. You remember the little school-house by the roadside, where two or three men met, week after week, to pour out their hearts in prayer to God, that He would be pleased to break in upon the death and darkness which reigned around; and that He would revive His work, and send out His light and His truth in converting power. You know how those prayers were heard and answered. You and I were privileged to move through those soul-stirring scenes in the province of Ulster; and I doubt not the memory of them is fresh with you, as it is with me, this day.

Well, what was the special character of that work, in its earlier stages? Was it not, most manifestly, a work of God's Spirit? Did not He take up and use instruments the most unfit and unfurnished, according to human thinking, for the accomplishment of His gracious purpose? Do we not remember the style and character of the agents who were chiefly used in the conversion of souls? Were they not, for the most part, "unlearned and ignorant men?" And, further, can we not distinctly recall the fact that there was a most decided setting aside of all human arrangement and official routine? Working men came from the field, the factory, and the workshop, to address crowded audiences; and we have seen hundreds hanging, in breath-

less interest, upon the lips of men who could not speak five words of good grammar. In short, the mighty tide of spiritual life and power rolled in upon us, and swept away, for the time being, a quantity of human machinery, and ignored all question of man's authority in the things of God and the service of Christ.

Now we can well remember, that just in so far as the Holy Ghost was owned and honoured, did the glorious work progress; and, on the other hand, in proportion as man intruded himself, in bustling self-importance, upon the domain of the Eternal Spirit, was the work hindered and quashed. I saw the truth of this illustrated in numberless cases. There was a vigorous effort made to cause the living water to flow in official and denominational channels, and this the Holy Ghost would not sanction. Moreover, there was a strong desire manifested, in many quarters, to make sectarian capital out of the blessed movement; and this the Holy Ghost resented.

Nor was this all. The work and the workmen were *lionized* in all directions. Cases of conversion which were judged to be "striking" were blazed abroad and paraded in the public prints. Travellers and tourists, from all parts, visited these persons, took notes of their words and ways, and wafted the report of them to the ends of the earth. Many poor creatures, who had up to that time lived in obscurity, unknown and unnoticed, found themselves, all of a sudden, objects of interest to the wealthy, the noble, and the public at large. The pulpit and the press proclaimed their sayings and doings; and, as might be expected, they completely lost their balance. Knaves and hypocrites abounded on all hands. It became a grand point to have some strange and extravagant experience to tell; some remarkable dream or vision to relate. And even where this ill-advised line of action did not issue in producing knavery and hypocrisy, the young converts became heady and high minded, and looked with a measure of contempt

upon old established Christians, or those who did not happen to be converted after their peculiar fashion—"stricken," as it was termed.

In addition to this, some very remarkable characters—men of desperate notoriety, who seemed to be converted, were conveyed from place to place, and placarded about the various streets, and crowds gathered to see them and hear them recount their history, which history was very frequently a disgusting detail of immoralities and excesses which ought never to have been named. Several of these remarkable men afterwards broke down, and returned with increased ardour, to their former practices.

These things, dearest A., I witnessed in various places. I believe the Holy Ghost was grieved and hindered, and the work marred thereby. I am thoroughly convinced of this; and hence it is that I think we should earnestly seek to honour the blessed Spirit, to lean upon Him, in all our work; to follow where He leads, not run before Him. His work will stand. "Whatsoever God doeth it shall be for ever." "The works that are done upon the earth, he is the doer of them." The remembrance of this will ever keep the mind well balanced. There is great danger of young workmen getting so excited about *their* work, *their* preaching, *their* gifts, as to lose sight of the blessed Master Himself. Moreover, they are apt to make preaching the *end* instead of the *means*. This works badly in every way. It injures themselves and it mars their work. The moment I make preaching my end, I am out of the current of the mind of God, whose end is to glorify Christ; and I am out of the current of the heart of Christ, whose end is the salvation of souls, and the full blessing of His Church. But where the Holy Ghost gets His proper place, where He is duly owned and trusted, there all will be right. There will be no exaltation of man; no bustling self-importance; no parading of the fruits of our work; no excitement. All will be calm, quiet, real, and unpretend-

ing. There will be the simple, earnest, believing, patient waiting upon God. Self will be in the shade; Christ will be exalted.

I often recall a sentence of yours, dearest A. I remember your once saying to me, "Heaven will be the best and safest place to hear the results of our work." This is a wholesome word for all workmen. I shudder when I see the names of Christ's servants paraded in the public journals, with flattering allusion to their work and its fruits. Surely those who pen such articles ought to reflect upon what they are doing; they should consider that they may be ministering to the very thing which they ought to desire to see mortified and subdued. I am most fully persuaded that the quiet, shady, retired path is the best and safest for the christian workman. It will not make him less earnest, but the contrary. It will not cramp his energy, but increase and intensify it. God forbid that you or I should pen a line or utter a sentence which might, in the most remote way, tend to discourage or hinder a single worker in all the vineyard of Christ. No, no, dearest A., this is not the moment for aught of this kind. We want to see the Lord's labourers thoroughly in earnest; but we believe, most assuredly, that true earnestness will ever result from the most absolute dependence upon God the Holy Ghost.

But only see how I have run on! And yet I have not referred to those passages of scripture of which I spoke in my last. Well, dearly beloved in the Lord, I am addressing one who is happily familiar with the Gospels and the Acts, and who therefore knows that the great Workman Himself, and all those who sought to tread in His blessed footsteps, owned and honoured the Eternal Spirit as the One by whom all their works were to be wrought.

I must now close, for the present, my much loved brother and fellow-labourer; and I do so with a full heart, commending you, in spirit, and soul, and body, to Him who has loved

us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and called us to the honoured post of workers in His gospel field. May He bless you and yours, most abundantly, and increase your usefulness a thousand fold!

As ever, and for ever,
Your deeply affectionate work-fellow,

* * *

SEED TIME IN HARVEST.

Go forth! though weeping, bearing precious seed,
Still sow in faith, though not a blade appears;
Go forth! the Lamb Himself the way doth lead,
The everlasting arms are o'er thee spread;
Thou'lt reap in joy all thou hast sown in tears.

Take up thy burden—bear it joyfully—
Fear not sin's darkest cave to enter in;
Though fierce thy foe, yet Israel's Lord is nigh,
And o'er thy fellow-men He hears thee sigh,
Seeking for Him thou lov'st, a soul to win.

The pastures of the wilderness may mock
Thine earnest labours. Look thou to the hills;
God shall the chambers of His dew unlock,
Till living waters from the smitten Rock
With fertilizing streams each furrow fills.

Ask not for sheaves, a holy patience keep;
Look for the early and the latter rain;
For all that faith hath scattered, love shall reap;
Gladness is sown—thy Lord may let thee weep;
But not one tear of thine shall be in vain.

'Tis thy Belovèd gently beckons on;
His love illumes for thee each passing cloud;
When yon fair land of light at last is won,
And seed time o'er, and harvest work begun,
He'll own the fruit that shadows now enshroud.

Behold! the Master standeth at the door;
Cry for Sabaoth's—raise thou thy voice;
Short hour of labour—soon it shall be o'er;
The dawn is breaking—night shall be no more,
And thou, with him who reaps, shalt then rejoice.

From "Whispers in the Palms."

CORRESPONDENCE.

59. "H. G. B.," Peckham. It is difficult for one to judge for another in the matter to which you refer. Each one must act before the Lord, and be guided of Him as to the best method of working. As a rule, it is the best way to study scripture apart from the idea of having to preach. It is not good always to be reading for others; one is in danger of falling into the mere business of sermon-making, which is very withering to the soul. It is well to go to the word on the principle set forth in John vii. 37, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and *drink*." We only speak of the principle, not the strict application of the passage. We should betake ourselves to the fountain of holy scripture, not to *draw* for others, but to *drink* for ourselves. Then we shall be always full, always ready for the Master's use. Far be it from us to encourage any one in a random, haphazard way of speaking on scripture. We believe such a habit to be ruinous to the soul of the speaker, and worse than wearisome to the souls of the hearers. The apostle's advice to his son Timothy is salutary to us all, "*Meditate* upon these things; give thyself *wholly* to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." (1 Tim. iv. 15, 16.) The "profiting" is sure to "appear" if the habit of meditation be diligently cultivated; but if one goes to a meeting with a sermon ready prepared, it *may* not be the thing which the Lord would have spoken at all. No doubt, the Lord can and does guide His servants in study and preparation beforehand; He can fix their minds upon the right subject, and teach the right method of handling it. He is so good that we can count on Him with fullest confidence in all things. But we have to watch against the habit of making ourselves up for an occasion, on the one hand, and against idleness and indifference on the other. May the Lord bless you, in your own soul, and help you in your work!

60. "A Reader," Halifax. We consider it perfectly scriptural "for three or four Christians who happen to be on the Lord's day, in a village or town where there is no assembly, to remember the Lord, in the breaking of bread."

61. "A. S. O.," Reading. There are very false notions afloat as to the point to which you call our attention; and

very many, like yourself, are troubled thereby. We are continually asked about the "unpardonable sin," and the "sin against the Holy Ghost." If you will read carefully Matthew xii. 24—32, you will see that our Lord speaks of "blasphemy against the Holy Ghost," of which the apostate Jews were guilty. For this there was and could be no forgiveness. What could be done for those who not only rejected the Son, but resisted the Holy Ghost, and attributed His blessed operation to Beelzebub? They could neither be forgiven in the "age" of the law, nor in that of Messiah. In short, it is wholly a question, in this scripture, of the apostate nation of Israel, given over to hopeless perdition. We know that, just before the opening of the millennial age, there will be a repentant remnant for whom a fountain shall be opened, and who shall be the nucleus of the restored nation. But this is far too wide a subject to enter upon here. We merely add that we judge it to be a temptation of Satan to lead you to imagine that you have committed "the unpardonable sin;" for you may rest assured, dear friend, that you have never been guilty of *any* sin which cannot be cancelled by that blood which cleanseth us from ALL sin. Many find difficulty in 1 John v. 16. "There is a sin unto death." This we believe to be a question of God's governmental dealings. We learn from 1 Corinthians xi. that God visits His people with sickness and even death itself because of their ways; but in neither of these passages is there any thought of "an unpardonable sin." We do not believe that any sinner, in this acceptable year, this day of salvation, is beyond the reach of the pardoning love of God, and the atoning blood of Jesus. Those who reject the gospel shall be given over to "a strong delusion." (2 Thess. ii. 10—12.) But that terrible moment has not yet arrived. "The day of vengeance" is held back in God's long-suffering mercy.

62. "J. C. H.," Purton. The subject is hardly suitable for "Things New and Old."

63. "A Constant Reader," Bristol. Genesis ii. 7 proves the grand foundation of the immortality of the soul, "*Man* became *a living soul.*" This was not the case with any other creature. If ever a moment could arrive in the which the soul shall cease to exist, then is there no force, no meaning in Genesis ii. 7. We need hardly say there are numberless other proofs; but this one is quite enough for us.

THE WORK OF GOD IN THE SOUL.

(Part ii.)

HAVING in our paper for July, glanced at two of those modes in which the Spirit of God works in the soul to produce a sense of need, namely, by convicting the conscience of guilt; and by pressing upon the spirit the just dread of danger; it remains for us to consider a third method which is by giving the heart to feel the utter vanity and unsatisfactoriness of all that this poor world can offer, in the way of pleasure or enjoyment.

This is, by no means, uncommon. We may frequently meet with very matured Christians who will tell you that they were brought to Christ, not so much by a sense of guilt, or a dread of danger, as by an intense longing after a certain undefinable something — a painful void in the heart—a sense of weariness, loneliness, and desolation. They felt a blank which nothing in this world could fill. They were heart-sick and disappointed. No doubt, they felt and acknowledged the broad truth that they were sinners; and, moreover, when they looked in the direction of the future they felt that there was, and could be, nothing for them but eternal misery and torment. But then the great prominent feature of the divine work in them was not so much conviction of sin or a fear of punishment, as a feeling of utter desolation and dissatisfaction. They found themselves in that condition of soul in which the study of the book of Ecclesiastes afforded a melancholy gratification. They had tried the world, in every shape and form, and, like the royal Preacher, had found it to be "vanity and vexation of spirit."

Now, we must be prepared for this variety in the ways of the Spirit of God. We are not to suppose that He will confine Himself, in His blessed operations, to any one particular type. Sometimes He produces, in the soul, the

most overwhelming sense of guilt, so that the heart is crushed to the earth, and nothing is felt, seen, or thought of, but the vileness, the heinousness, and the blackness of sin. The dark catalogue of sins rises like a great mountain before the vision of the soul, and well nigh sinks it into despair. The soul refuses to be comforted. Shame and confusion, sackcloth and ashes, are felt to be the only suited portion of the guilty one.

At other times, God sees fit to bring before the soul the terrors of hell, and the awful reality of spending an eternity in that region of unutterable gloom and misery. The dark shadow of the future is made to fall upon the brightest scenes of the present; and the thought of the wrath to come so presses upon the heart, that nothing seems to yield the smallest relief or comfort. All is deep, deep gloom and horror.

And, finally, as we have said, in other cases, the divine Worker is pleased to awaken the soul to the painful discovery and consciousness that it is not within the compass of earth to furnish a satisfying portion for an immortal spirit; that all under the sun wears the stamp of death upon it; that human life is but a vapour that speedily vanishes away; that if a man were to live a thousand years twice told—were he to possess the wealth of the universe—could he concentrate in his own person all the honours and all the dignities which this world could bestow —were he at the very highest pinnacle of power—were he renowned, throughout the wide wide world, for genius, for intellect, and for moral worth; in a word, had he all that earth could yield or mortal man possess, the heart would still want something, there would still be a painful void, there would still be the cry, "Oh! for an object."

Thus varied are the operations of the Spirit of God in the souls of men. No doubt, there may be a sense of guilt, a fear of danger, and a painful consciousness of the emptiness and vanity of all earthly possessions and enjoy-

ments, altogether apart from any divine work in the soul; but we are now occupied only with this latter; and we feel the deep importance of being able to discern and appreciate the work of God's Spirit in the human heart, as also of seeking to help it on. We greatly dread anything like human interference with the progress of the kingdom of God in the soul. There is danger on all sides. There is danger of casting a damp on young converts; and there is danger of mistaking the mere workings of nature for the action of the Spirit of God. Nor is this all. We are frequently in danger of running directly counter to the object which the Lord has in view in His dealings with the soul. We may, for example, be actually seeking to extract the arrow which He is sending home to the very centre of the soul: we may be seeking to cover up a wound which He would have probed to the very bottom.

All these things demand the utmost vigilance and care on the part of those who take an interest in souls. We are, all of us, liable to make the most serious mistakes, either in the way of discouraging and repulsing souls that ought rather to be fostered and cheered; or, on the other hand, of recognizing and accrediting as of God what is merely the fruit of religious nature working. In short, it is a serious thing to put our hands to the work of God, in any way; and He alone can give the needed wisdom and grace in each case as it arises. And He *will*, blessed be His name, give abundantly to all who simply wait on Him. "He giveth *more* grace." Precious word! There is absolutely no limit to it. It shines, as an exhaustless motto, on our Father's treasury door, assuring us of the most ample supply "for exigence of every hour."

Let us not, therefore, be discouraged by the magnitude and seriousness of the work, or the danger attending it. God is sufficient. The work is His; and if He deigns, in His marvellous grace, to use us—as He surely does—as His co-workers, He will liberally furnish us with all

that is needed for each case as it arises. But we must wait on Him—wait patiently—wait humbly—wait trustfully. We must seek to lay *self* aside, with its bustling self-importance and excitement. We must seek, through grace, to get rid of that spirit which would be continually thrusting forward that wretched "I, I, I." In a word, nature must be kept in the shade, and Christ alone exalted. Then, assuredly, the Spirit of God will use us in the glorious work which He is carrying on in souls. He will give us the needed skill and ability for each specific case; and lead us, in adoring wonder, along that path in which He is moving, and in which, too, He is displaying the precious mysteries of His new creation.

Nothing can be more wonderful, nothing more intensely interesting, than to mark the progress of the work of God in the soul. One of our own poets has given expression to this when he says

> "This is my joy that ne'er can fail,
> To see my Saviour's arm prevail,
> To mark the steps of grace:
> Now new born souls convinced of sin,
> His blood revealed to them within,
> Extol the Lamb in every place."

But, we may rest assured, in order to discern and appreciate—to say nothing of co-operating in—this most precious and sacred work, there must be the anointed eye, the circumcised heart, the unshod foot, the clean hands. The Spirit of God is very sensitive, very easily grieved, quenched, and hindered. He does not like to have a noise made about His work. We have, more than once, seen the work of the Holy Ghost interrupted altogether by reason of the unhallowed excitement of those who were engaged in it.

It is well to remember this. If it be true—and it is true—that unbelief hinders the commencing of the Spirit's work; it is equally true that undue interference hinders its

progress. The slightest impress of the human finger is apt to soil the mysterious and beautiful work of God. True it is—blessedly true—that the Lord will use us, if we really look to Him, in humility of mind and self-emptiness. Indeed, we constantly find that, in carrying on His work, He allows us to do just as much as we can do; while He Himself—adored be His holy Name!—only does what we cannot. This is strikingly illustrated in the scene at the tomb of Lazarus, in John xi. There the Lord commands those around Him to "take away the stone;" just because it was something they could do. But it is He who cries, "Lazarus, come forth;" because this was something which only He could do. Then again, He says, "Loose him, and let him go;" thus allowing them to co-operate so far as they were able.

Now, it strikes us that we have, in all this, a sample of the Lord's gracious way with His servants. In every little thing in which He can use them He does. But oh! let us be careful not to meddle with His work. Let it be ours to gaze and worship, to mark the marvellous unfoldings of that new creation in which "all things are of God." His work shall endure throughout all generations. All that which bears the stamp of His hand shall abide for ever. Hence, therefore, it is our wisdom, as well as our blessing, just to mark His hand and follow where He leads.

(To be continued, if the Lord will.)

Carry on Thy new creation—
  Faithful, holy, may we be,
Joyful in Thy full salvation,
  More and more conformed to Thee.
Changed from glory into glory,
  Till in heaven we take our place,
Then to worship and adore Thee,
  Lost in wonder, love, and praise!

A THIRD LETTER TO A FRIEND ON THE WORK OF EVANGELIZATION.

June, 1869.

DEAREST A——,

There is another point which stands intimately connected with the subject of my last letter, and that is the place the word of God occupies in the work of evangelization. In my letter of last month, as you will remember, I referred to the work of the Holy Ghost, and the immense importance of giving Him His proper place. How clearly the precious word of God as connected with the action of the Holy Spirit, I need not say. Both are inseparably linked in those memorable words of our Lord to Nicodemus—words so little understood—so sadly misapplied: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." John iii.

Now you and I, dearest A., fully believe that, in the above passage, the word is presented under the figure of "water." Thank God, we are not disposed to give any credit to the ritualistic absurdity of baptismal regeneration. We are, I believe, most thoroughly convinced that no one ever did, ever will, or ever could, get life by water baptism. That all who believe in Christ ought to be baptized, we fully admit; but this is a totally different thing from the fatal error that substitutes an ordinance for the atoning death of Christ, the regenerating power of the Holy Ghost, and the life-giving virtues of the word of God. I shall not waste your time or my own in combating this error; but at once assume that you agree with me in thinking that when our Lord speaks of being "born of water and of the Spirit," He refers to the word and the Holy Ghost.

Thus, then, the word is the grand instrument to be used in the work of evangelization. Many passages of holy scripture establish this point with such clearness and

decision, as to leave no room whatever for dispute. In the first chapter of James, verse 18, we read, "Of his own will begat he us *with the word of truth.*" Again, in 1 Peter i. 23, we read, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, *by the word of God,* which liveth and abideth for ever"—I must quote the whole passage because of its immense importance in connection with our subject —"For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord endureth for ever. *And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.*"

This last clause is of unspeakable value to the evangelist. It binds him, in the most distinct manner, to the word of God, as the instrument—the only instrument—the all-sufficient instrument, to be used in his glorious work. He is to give the word to the people; and the more simply he gives it the better. The pure water should be allowed to flow from the heart of God to the heart of the sinner, without receiving a tinge from the channel through which it flows. The evangelist is to preach the word; and he is to preach it in simple dependence upon the power of the Holy Ghost. This is the true secret of success in preaching.

But, dearest A., while I urge this great cardinal point in the work of preaching—and I believe it cannot be too strongly urged—I am very far indeed from thinking that the evangelist should give his hearers a quantity of truth. So far from this, I consider it a very great mistake. He ought to leave this to the teacher, lecturer, or pastor. I often fear that very much of our preaching shoots over the heads of the people, owing to the fact of our seeking rather to unfold truth than to reach souls. We rest satisfied, it may be, with having delivered a very clear and forcible lecture, a very interesting and instructive exposition of scripture, something very valuable for the people of God; but the unconverted hearer has sat unmoved, un-

reached, unimpressed. There has been nothing for him. The lecturer has been more occupied with his lecture than with the sinner—more taken up with his subject than with the soul.

Now I am thoroughly convinced that this is a serious mistake, and one into which we are all—at least I am—very apt to fall. I deplore it deeply, and I earnestly desire to correct it. I question if this very mistake may not be viewed as the true secret of our lack of success. But, dearest A., I should not, perhaps, say "*our* lack" but *my* lack. I do not think—so far as I know aught of your ministry, that you are exactly chargeable with the defect to which I am, just now, referring. Of this, however, you will be the best judge yourself; but of one thing I am certain, namely, that the most successful evangelist is the one who keeps his eye fixed on the sinner, who has his heart bent on the salvation of souls, yea, the one with whom the love for precious souls amounts almost to a passion. It is not the man who unfolds the most truth, but the man who longs most after souls, that will have the most seals to his ministry.

I assert all this, mark you, in the full and clear recognition of the fact with which I commenced this letter, namely, that the word is the grand instrument in the work of conversion. This fact must never be lost sight of, never weakened. It matters not what agency may be used to make the furrow, or in what form the word may clothe itself, or by what vehicle it may be conveyed; it is only by "the word of truth" that souls are begotten.

All this is divinely true, and we would ever bear it in mind. But do we not often find that persons who undertake to preach the gospel—particularly if they continue long in one place—are very apt to leave the domain of the evangelist—most blessed domain!—and travel into that of the teacher and lecturer? This is what I deprecate and deeply deplore. I know I have erred in this way myself,

and I mourn over the error. I do believe, dearest A.—I write in all loving freedom to you—the Lord has, of late, deepened immensely in my soul the sense of the vast importance of earnest gospel preaching. I do not—God forbid I should—think the less of the work of the teacher or pastor. I believe that wherever there is a heart that loves Christ, it will delight to feed—tend the precious lambs and sheep of the flock of Christ, that flock which he purchased with His own blood.

But the sheep must be gathered before they can be fed; and how are they to be gathered but by the earnest preaching of the gospel? It is the grand business of the evangelist to go forth upon the dark mountains of sins and error, to sound the gospel trumpet and gather the sheep; and I feel convinced that he will best accomplish this work, not by elaborate exposition of truth—not by lectures however clear, valuable, and instructive—not by lovely unfoldings of prophetic, dispensational, or doctrinal truth—most precious and important in the right place; but by fervid, pointed, earnest dealing with immortal souls—the warning voice—the solemn appeal—the faithful reasoning of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come—the awakening presentation of death and judgment—the dread realities of eternity, the lake of fire, and the worm that never dies.

In short, beloved, it strikes me we want awakening preachers. I fully admit that there is such a thing as *teaching* the gospel, as well as *preaching* it. For example, I find Paul teaching the gospel in Romans i.—viii.; just as I find him preaching the gospel in Acts xiii. or xvii. This is of the very last importance, at all times, inasmuch as there are almost sure to be a number of what we call "exercised souls" at our public preachings, and these need an emancipating gospel—the full, clear, elevated, resurrection gospel.

But admitting all this, I still believe that what is needed for successful evangelization is, not so much a great quantity of truth, as an intense love for souls. Look at that

eminent evangelist George Whitfield. What think you was the secret of his success? No doubt, you have looked into his printed sermons. Have you found any great breadth of truth in them? I question it. Indeed I must say I have been struck with the contrary. But oh! dearest A., there was that in Whitfield which you and I may well covet and long to cultivate. There was a burning love for souls —a thirst for their salvation—a mighty grappling with the conscience—a bold, earnest, face-to-face dealing with men about their past ways, their present state, their future destiny. These were the things that God owned and blessed; and He will own and bless them still. I am persuaded—I write as under the very eye of God—that if our hearts are bent upon the salvation of souls, God will use us in that divine and glorious work. But, on the other hand, if we abandon ourselves to the withering influences of a cold, heartless, godless fatalism—if we content ourselves with a formal and official statement of the gospel—a very cheerless sort of thing—if, to use a vulgar phrase, our preaching is on the principle of "take it or leave it," need we wonder if we do not see conversions? The wonder would be if there were any to see.

No, no; I believe we want to look seriously into this great practical subject. It demands the solemn and dispassionate consideration of all who are engaged in the work. There are dangers on all sides. There are conflicting opinions on all sides. But I cannot conceive how any christian man can be satisfied to shirk the responsibility of looking after souls. A man may say, "I am not an evangelist; that is not my line; I am more of a teacher, or a pastor." Well, I understand this; but will any one tell me that a teacher or pastor may not go forth, in earnest longing, after souls? I cannot admit it for a moment. Nay more; it does not matter, in the least, what a man's gift is, or even though he should not possess any prominent gift at all, he can and ought, nevertheless, to cultivate a

longing desire for the salvation of souls. Would it be right to pass a house on fire, without giving warning, even though one were not a member of the Fire Brigade? Should we not seek to save a drowning man, even though we could not command the use of a patent lifeboat? Who in his senses would maintain aught so monstrous? So, in reference to souls, it is not so much gift or knowledge of truth that is needed, as a deep and earnest longing for souls—a keen sense of their danger, and a desire for their rescue.

Ever, dearest A.,
Your deeply affectionate yoke-fellow,

* * *

SHORT PAPERS ON CHURCH HISTORY;

&c., &c., &c.

THE CONVERSION OF SAUL OF TARSUS.

No event in the progress of the Church, so deeply, or so blessedly, affects her after history, as the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. From being the chief of sinners, he became the chief of saints—from being the most violent opposer of Christ, he became the most zealous defender of the faith. As a hater and persecutor of the name of Jesus on the earth, he was "chief;" all others, compared with him, were subordinate. Acts ix. 1 Tim. i.

It is quite evident, from what he says of himself, that he believed Judaism, not only to be divine, but to be God's perpetual and unchangeable religion to man. It would be difficult to account for the strength of his Jewish prejudices on any other principle. Therefore all attempts to set aside the Jews' religion, and to introduce another, he considered to be of the enemy, and to be strenuously opposed. He had heard the noble speech of Stephen—he had wit-

nessed his triumphant death; but his subsequent persecution of the Christians shewed that the moral glory of that scene had made no serious impression on his mind. He was blinded by zeal, but zeal for Judaism now, was zeal against the Lord. At this very time, he was "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord."

Hearing that some of the persecuted saints had found a shelter in Damascus, an ancient city of Syria, he was determined to go there, and bring them back to Jerusalem, as criminals. For this purpose, he received letters from the high priest and the estate of the elders, that he might bring them bound to Jerusalem to be punished. (Acts xxii., xxvi.) He thus became the very apostle of Jewish malice against the disciples of Jesus. Ignorantly, no doubt, but he made himself their willing missionary.

With his mind wrought up to the most violent pitch of persecuting zeal, he sets forth on his memorable journey. Unshaken in his ardent attachment to the religion of Moses, and determined to punish the converts to Christianity, as apostates from the faith of their ancestors, he approaches Damascus. But there, in the full energy of his mad career, the Lord Jesus stops him. A light from heaven, above the light of the sun, shines around him, and overwhelms him in its dazzling brightness. He falls to the earth—broken in will, subdued in mind, humbled in spirit, and altogether changed. His heart is now subject to the voice that speaks to him; he owns its power and authority. Reasoning, extenuation, self-justification, have no place in the presence of the Lord.

A voice from the excellent glory had said unto him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." Thus, the Lord Jesus, though in heaven, declares Himself to be still identified with His disciples on the earth. The oneness of the Church

with Jesus, its Head in heaven, the germ of the blessed truth of the "*one body*," is folded up in these few words, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou *me?*.....I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." To be at war with the saints, is to be at war with the Lord Himself. Blessed truth for the believer, awfully solemn for the persecutor!

The vision Saul had seen, and the terrible discovery he had made, completely engross him. He is blind for three days, and can neither eat nor drink. Thus he enters Damascus! blind, broken, humbled, beneath the solemn judgment of the Lord! How different to what he had intended! He now joins himself to the company which he had resolved to exterminate. Nevertheless, he enters in by the door, and humbly takes his place with the disciples of the Lord. Ananias, a godly disciple, is sent to comfort him. He receives his sight, he is filled with the Holy Ghost, he is baptized, he receives meat and is strengthened.

It is the thought of some, that the Lord gives in the conversion of Saul, not only a sample of His long-suffering, as in every sinner that is saved, but as a sign of the future restoration of Israel. Paul tells us himself, that he obtained mercy because he did it ignorantly in unbelief; and this is the very ground of mercy for Israel in the latter day. As our Lord Himself prayed for them:—"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Peter also says, "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." Acts iii. 17.

But as the apostleship of Paul differs in many respects from that of the twelve, it will be necessary to notice it briefly. Unless this difference is understood, the true character of the present dispensation will be but feebly apprehended.

THE APOSTLESHIP OF PAUL.

The LAW and the PROPHETS were until JOHN; after John the LORD Himself, in His own Person, offers the kingdom

to Israel; but "his own received him not." They crucified the Prince of life, but God raised him from the dead, and seated Him at His own right hand in heavenly places. We have next THE TWELVE APOSTLES. They are endued with the Holy Ghost, and bear witness to the resurrection of Christ. But the testimony of the twelve is despised, the Holy Ghost is resisted, Stephen is martyred, the final offer of mercy is rejected, and now the Lord's dealings with Israel as a people, close for a season. The scenes of Shiloh are enacted over again, Ichabod is written on Jerusalem, and a new witness is called out, as in the days of Samuel.

THE GREAT APOSTLE of the Gentiles now comes before us. He is as one born out of due time and out of due place. His apostleship had nothing to do with Jerusalem, or with the twelve. It was outside of both. His call was extraordinary and direct from the Lord in heaven. He is privileged to bring out the new thing, the heavenly character of the Church—that Christ and the Church are one, and that heaven is their common home. (Ephesians ii.) So long as God was dealing with Israel these blessed truths were kept a secret in His own mind. "Unto me," says Paul, "who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ." Ephesians iii.

There could be no doubt, from the *character* of the Apostle's call, as to its divine authority. "Not of men, neither by man," as he says in his Epistle to the Galatians, "but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead." That is—it was "not of men," as to its source—not of any *synod* of official men. "Neither by man" was it, as to the medium through which his commission came. He was not only a saint, but an apostle,

by calling: and that call was by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead. In some respects, his apostleship was even of a higher order than that of the twelve. *They* had been called by Jesus when on the earth, *he* had been called by the *risen* and *glorified* Christ in heaven. And, his call being thus from heaven, he wanted neither the sanction nor the recognition of the other apostles. "But when it pleased God to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus." Galatians i. 15, 16.

The *manner* of Saul's call to be an apostle is worthy of special note, as it struck at the root of Jewish pride, and may also be viewed as the deathblow to the vain notion of apostolic succession. The apostles, whom the Lord had chosen and appointed when He was on the earth, were neither the source nor the channel, in any way, of Saul's appointment. They did not cast lots for him, as they did in the case of Matthias. Then, they were scarcely off Jewish ground, which may account for their deciding by lot. It was an ancient form in Israel of discovering the divine will in such matters. But these emphatic words, "Paul, an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ," completely exclude the intervention of man in every shape and form. Apostolic succession is set aside. We are *saints by calling* and *servants by calling*. And that call must come from heaven. Paul stands before us, as the true pattern for all preachers of the gospel, and for all ministers of the word. Nothing can be more simple than the ground he takes as a preacher, great apostle though he was. "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; *we also believe, and therefore speak.*" 2 Cor. iv. 13.

Immediately after he was baptized and strengthened, he began to confess his faith in the Lord Jesus, and to preach in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God. This is a new thing. Peter preached that He had been exalted to the right hand of God—that He had been made both Lord and Christ; but Paul preaches the higher doctrine of His personal glory—"that he is the Son of God." In Matthew xvi., Christ is revealed by the Father *to* the disciples, as "the Son of the living God." But now He is revealed, not only *to* Paul, but *in* Paul. "It pleased God to reveal his Son *in* me," he says. But who is sufficient to speak of the privileges and blessings of those to whom the Son of God is thus revealed? The dignity and security of the Church rest on this blessed truth; and also, the gospel of the glory, which was especially entrusted to Paul, and which he calls "my gospel."

"On the Son thus revealed within," as one has sweetly said, "hangs everything that is peculiar to the calling and glory of the Church—her holy prerogatives—acceptance in the Beloved, with forgiveness of sins through His blood—entrance into the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, so as to have made known to us the mystery of the will of God—future inheritance in and with Him in whom all things in heaven and earth are to be gathered—and the present seal and earnest of this inheritance is the Holy Ghost. This bright roll of privileges is inscribed by the apostle, thus—'spiritual blessings in the heavenlies; and so they are; blessings through the Spirit flowing from and linking us with Him who is the Lord in the heavens."* Ephesians i. 3—14.

But the *doctrine* of the Church—this mystery of love, and grace, and privilege, was not revealed until Paul declared it. The Lord had spoken of it as that which the

* See fuller details on this subject, by J. G. B., *Christian Witness*, vol. iv., p. 221; and by W. K., *Lectures on Galatians*, chap. i.

presence of the Comforter was to effect, saying, "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." And again, when He said to the disciples after the resurrection, "I ascend unto my Father and your Father, unto my God and your God." Of this "bright roll" of blessing Paul was especially and *characteristically* the apostle.

We must now leave the history of Saul for a little, and turn to Peter, who occupies the field until Saul commences his public ministry in Acts xiii.

CHAPTER IV.

In place of going over consecutively the remaining chapters of the Acts, we think it may be more interesting, and equally instructive to our readers, to consider them in connection with the history of the apostles, especially with the history of the two *great* apostles. The book of the Acts is almost entirely occupied with the acts of Peter and of Paul—though, of course, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost—the one, as the great apostle of the Jews; the other, as the great apostle of the Gentiles. But we would also embrace the present opportunity, to record the names, in our short history, and briefly to notice, the first personally chosen companions and missionaries of our blessed Lord—the twelve apostles.

But before attempting an outline of these interesting lives, it may be well to state the object we have in view in doing so. We are stepping a little out of the usual course. In none of the Church Histories that we know, are the lives of the apostles presented in a regular form: and the books in which such lives appear are beyond the reach of many of the readers of "Things New and Old." Our object, therefore, so far, is to meet that need, and place them within their reach.

But we must ever bear in mind, that beyond the sacred narrative, there is very little known of the apostles that

can be relied upon. The traditional and the scriptural, the certain and the uncertain, are almost hopelessly blended together in the writings of the Fathers. Every distinct ray of historical light we greatly value, but it is only to the scriptures that we can turn with certainty. Still, the few scattered notices which we have there, of some of the apostles, with what may be gathered elsewhere, when brought together may give the reader a view of the person and individuality of the apostle, which he never had before. Others, of note, besides the apostles, will come before us in connection with them, especially with Paul; so that our readers will have, in a convenient form, a brief outline of nearly all the noble preachers, teachers, confessors, and martyrs of the Lord Jesus spoken of in the New Testament.

WHAT GOD DID FOR SANDY.

HAVING heard that the Spirit of God was manifestly working in the fishing village of ——, I went to visit some of the families, with two servants of God, who for years have laboured there, to bring souls to Christ, and whose prayers are now being largely answered. We went from cottage to cottage, and found in each, two or three who had lately tasted the joys of salvation. As one heard the "Abba Father" clearly uttered by those babes in Christ, the mind could not but rise to that scene, where there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over *one* sinner that repenteth.

The scriptures apparently most used of the Holy Ghost to give peace to souls were, "He that believeth *hath* everlasting life, and shall *not* come into judgment, but *is passed* from death unto life." "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is *in* his Son." "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from *all* sin."

One true evidence that they were really begotten of God

by the word of truth was their anxiety for the salvation of others. Wives would prevent their husbands and sons from going to sea, in the hope that while the Holy Ghost was actively "convincing of sin and judgment to come" those dear to them might be brought to see their real condition before God, and be saved by looking to Jesus.

They appeared to have strong faith in the power of prayer, and, like Lydia of old, in the prayer meeting as the place to get the blessing. Even those who were bold enough to withstand the work themselves, feared to prevent their families going. A remarkable instance of this came under my notice: after visiting for more than an hour, we were leaving the square, when I observed a middle aged fisherman sitting mending his nets. He looked very unhappy, so I approached him by saying "The Lord is making many souls in your village very happy, have you shared the common joy?" He answered me rudely, "I never saw such a time, I'll be bound for it, hypocrites are numerous in this square, they are better servants of the devil than I am, I am not going to join them I assure you, you will see what fine fellows these hymn singers will yet turn out." In vain I tried to shew him that God was beseeching *him* to receive Christ—he turned away, impatiently saying he had his work to do. I left him with the remark, "I will pray for you, and I believe God will save *your* soul."

I visited the village, a fortnight later, and on entering one cottage, the sister in the Lord who was with me said, "This was a well known bad character, he went by the name of S——. He scoffed at the work of God and said the converted men were the devil's best servants." I looked at the middle aged fisherman and he at me. I recognized the features of the unhappy looking seaman who a fortnight before said he would not join the hypocrites. Now the expression of misery had given place to the brightness befitting the countenance of one who could sing of his

Father's love. I asked him if he remembered my words on parting with him, and his answer was "Well indeed, madam, and the prayer has been answered. What joy I now have *in Him* who died for me!"

I asked him to give me the history of his conversion, which was as follows.

"The very day you spoke to me in the square, my wife said 'I am going to that prayer meeting to-night. Mother is all changed and so is sister, and I would like to see what they do at that meeting.' I felt much annoyed, but only said, 'Well wife, if you go you are a great fool, but go if you will, they will not get me to go.' She tried to persuade me to go with her, but I would not listen. I got very angry, and yet I felt afraid to say to her 'you must not go.' I was very sullen, and spoke little all that afternoon.

"When my wife had gone to the meeting I became most miserable. I could not stay in the house, so wandered out and got to the back side of the meeting house. I tried to hear what was going on. I felt afraid my wife would get changed and somehow thought she would. I stood awhile and began to think 'well, there is reality in those people.' I could not stand longer, so again wandered home most unhappy. I went to bed. My wife returned about ten o'clock, but I took no notice of her. She came to the side of the bed, and said 'Oh! are you sleeping, Sandy? I must tell you I am saved,' and she fell on her knees and praised God for saving her—she prayed for *me!* My whole soul was stirred, but pride and the devil would not let me own I was miserable. At last I said, with the perspiration bursting all over me, 'What do you *feel*, Jean?' 'Feel! It's no feeling, Sandy, that saves a woman! it's just believing. I believe that God speaks the truth when He says that Christ died for *my* sins. The Bible says if I believe this, He will give me eternal life—now I do believe it and I will never come under the sinner's judgment, for another verse says, "There is *no* condemnation to them that are *in*

Christ." Oh believe that, Sandy, and you will be saved and we will both then be so happy.'

"How the devil did try to keep my mouth shut and prevent my owning that the Spirit of God was convincing *me* that *I* needed a Saviour! At last I said, 'Now, wife, pray that *I* may be saved.' She prayed, and such a power of the Spirit came over me that I thought I saw the Saviour on the cross. I cried out, 'Oh Jean, I see my Saviour and His wounds bleed for *my* sins.' She cried, 'Hold to that, Sandy,' and we prayed together that *all* my unbelief might be taken away. She thanked God that I was saved, then I did it too, and we slept none that night for the joy of thinking that we would never come into judgment, but that we as brands had been plucked from the burning."

My heart rejoiced to hear this simple clear confession of passing from death unto life: but I longed to know if he understood what power was engaged to keep him stedfast till he reached the glory, so I said, "Well, Sandy, and how are you going on? is your faith still bright, and are you getting to know Him better who *has* saved you?" His answer was very nice and simple: "I am just always looking away from my poor, weak, worthless self, right up to Christ, for He has said 'I will never leave you.'"

I spoke to him of his body being the temple of the Holy Ghost, what holiness of life this demanded, and pressed upon him, that he had no strength of his own. He said "I am just looking to the Lord Jesus for strength to enable me to do *everything to* Him, and to keep me from doing anything unworthy of the One who gave His life for such a poor wicked sinner as I was."

The day after his conversion he went to the prayer meeting and there made *full confession* of what God had done for his soul. He took his place amongst the ranks of the saved.

The Lord continues to bless and save souls in this village. The prayer meeting is crowded, and it is very interesting

to hear the fishermen beseeching God, that His saving grace might extend to the town of A——.

One cannot but hope, that those who are thus delivered from the grasp of Satan, may not stop with mere deliverance from hell, but unreservedly yield themselves to the teaching of the Holy Ghost, who will guide the simple into *all* truth and make them *devoted* to Christ, and be His witnesses in the scene of His rejection, walking with garments unspotted by this present evil world.

THE USEFUL LIFE.

Go, labour on; spend and be spent—
Thy joy to do the Father's will;
It is the way the Master went,
Should not the servant tread it still?

Go, labour on; 'tis not for nought;
Thy earthly loss is heavenly gain;
Men heed thee, love thee, praise thee not,
The Master praises—what are men?

Go, labour on; enough, while here,
If He shall praise thee, if He deign
Thy willing heart to mark and cheer;
No toil for Him shall be in vain.

Go, labour on, while it is day,
The world's dark night is hastening on;
Speed, speed thy work, cast sloth away:
It is not thus that souls are won.

Men die in darkness at thy side,
Without a hope to cheer the tomb;
Take up the torch, and wave it wide,
The torch that lights time's thickest gloom.

Toil on, faint not, keep watch, and pray;
Be wise the erring soul to win;
Go forth into the world's highway,
Compel the wanderer to come in.

Toil on, and in thy toil rejoice;
For toil comes rest, for exile home:
Soon shalt thou hear the Bridegroom's voice,
The midnight peal, Behold, I come!

H. B.

CORRESPONDENCE.

64. "B. Y." We truly sympathize with you in your present state of soul; but can hardly attempt to enter upon it in a brief reply. One thing we must say, namely this, you want to come as an utterly lost one—a complete bankrupt, to the Saviour; your reasonings will drive you to distraction. Come, like a little child, to Jesus; rest in Him and in His finished work. In Him you will find salvation, strength, and victory. *Do come!*

65. "C. H. K.," Faversham. 2 Corinthians xii. gives the *positive standing* and the *possible state* of a Christian. His positive standing is that of "a man *in Christ.*" His possible state is, either to be in paradise with Christ, or sunk in all the wretchedness presented in the last two verses. Flesh is incurable; even the third heavens cannot mend it. Thank God, we are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit. May we walk in the Spirit! May we remember that, at any moment, our place may be paradise with Christ! May we mortify our members!

66. "H. H. H." We can see no sort of sense or meaning in a person breaking bread by himself. Where is there the expression of the unity of the body? Where is the fellowship? We can hardly imagine such an idea entering into the mind.

67. "G. K.," Sydenham. The parable of the unjust steward, in Luke xvi., has nothing whatever to do with salvation, forgiveness, or eternal life. Its object is to press upon those who are saved the importance of using the present with their eye on the future—of using the things of time with a view to eternity. Compare 1 Timothy vi. 17—19. We have lately gone into this subject in our "Correspondence."

68. "J. R.," Stratford. The term "angel" in Revelation ii., iii. refers to the mystic representative of the church before God. The angel and the church are sometimes used interchangeably. For instance, "Unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write . . . . behold, the devil will cast *some of you.*" He passes from the angel to the church as though they were one and the same. In short, the term "star" or "angel" is the church mystically represented above; the "candlestick" is the church responsible below.

69. "J. M. and "T. M.," Bradford. We believe there are two evils involved in such membership as you name.

In the first place, you are unequally yoked together with unbelievers, which you are expressly told not to be. (2 Cor. vi. 14.) In the second place, you surrender your individual responsibility, and become merged in an organization for whose every act you are morally responsible.

70. "J. G.," Tunbridge Wells. The subject of your letter is deeply interesting: but it is, as you will doubtless admit, hardly in our line.

71. "L. L.," Malvern. We commend you to God and the word of His grace. May He keep you close to Himself!

72. "H. S. A.," Reading. Some copies read Revelation xxii. 14 thus, "Blessed are they that have washed their robes." We do not presume to judge as to the correctness of this reading; but it would quite remove your difficulty. If the reading in our authorized version be correct, we should quite accept your interpretation.

73. "J. W.," Forest Hill. Assuredly we all need to watch against the creeping in of a Laodicean spirit. May the Lord keep us!

74. "W. H. J.," Cambridge. Your acrostic is interesting; and, owing to the occasion of it, most touching; but it would not do for insertion.

75. "A Sister," Cheltenham. We refer you to 72 for an answer to your enquiry.

76. "S. G.," Chipping Sodbury. It is perfectly useless for any one to send us such questions, we are fully determined that nothing shall induce us to discuss them in the pages of "Things New and Old."

77. "C. L. E.," We should think that Peter's case furnishes a very distinct answer to your question. Did not he fall, and that grievously? And was not he restored both to communion and to service—yea deeper communion and higher service than ever? Read John xxi. 1—19.

78. "J. B. M. D.," Blackrock. We consider the two statements perfectly compatible; but we cannot enter upon the matter just now. A few words of conversation would be more effectual than pages of writing. God bless you!

79. "E. B.," Hurst. Accept our best thanks for your kind letter. We feel assured the Lord will be better to you than all your fears. Seek to get very close to Him in the spirit of your mind. Give Him the full confidence of your heart. Then will your peace flow as a river, and your lips and your life speak His worthy praise.

THE WORK OF GOD IN THE SOUL.

(Part iii.)

BEFORE entering upon the second division of our subject, we feel constrained to put a pointed question or two to the reader. We trust he will bear with us in so doing. We are aware that some persons do not like close, personal dealing. They prefer the simple unfolding of truth and leaving it to do its own work. Well, we, too, value the unfolding of divine truth; and we know that the Holy Ghost alone can apply the truth, in saving or edifying power, to the heart and conscience of the reader or the hearer.

But, on the other hand, we believe it to be the bounden duty of the writer or speaker to do his very utmost, in the way of appeal, exhortation, and pointed enquiry, to affect the heart, reach the conscience, and enlighten the understanding of his reader or hearer. We must remember that we have a double duty to perform; we have to unfold *truth;* and we have to deal with the *soul.* All preachers, teachers, and writers should ever keep this in the remembrance of the thoughts of their hearts. If a man occupies himself *only* with abstract truth, his ministry is apt to prove unpractical and unfruitful. If he occupies himself *only* with the souls, his ministry will prove unfurnished and uninteresting. If he occupies himself duly with *both,* he will prove "a good minister of Jesus Christ."

Hence, therefore, beloved reader, we feel that we should be leaving one half of our work undone, did we not, from time to time, turn from our subject, in order to make an earnest appeal to thee; and we would, now, earnestly entreat of thee, as in the immediate presence of Him with whom we have to do, to give thy undivided attention to the

following question. Be honest with thyself—be earnest—be real, and rest assured that God will bless thee.

Hast thou, then, dear friend, been led to feel thy need? Has the Spirit of God wrought in thy heart to produce a sense of guilt, a dread of judgment, or a consciousness of the utter vanity of all under the sun? Canst thou say from thy very heart, "Woe is me! for I am undone"—"Behold, I am vile"—"I am black"—"I am a sinful man?" All these are distinct utterances of men like thyself—men of like passions—but of men under the quickening visitation of the Holy Ghost, and the convicting action of the truth of God. Be assured of it, they are good words, the fruit of most precious exercises in the soul—such exercises as we delight to see. It is a grand thing to see the soul thoroughly broken down before God, thoroughly sensible of its lost and ruined condition, of its deep guilt, and of its exposure to the just judgment and wrath of a holy, sin-hating God. It was no mere surface work with Job, Isaiah, or Peter, when they gave utterance to the words which we have just transcribed. The ploughshare had entered the very depths of the soul. The whole moral being was permeated by the light of divine holiness. The arrow of conviction had pierced to the very centre of the heart. It was real work. Not one of those beloved saints of God could have rested in the flippant wordy confession of the fact that "we are all sinners." No mere empty generalities would do for them. All was deep, real, and personal. They were in the presence of God, and this is always a real and a solemn matter.

Now we would here distinctly state, once for all, that the exercises of the soul have nothing to do with the ground of salvation or peace. We cannot possibly be too simple and clear as to this. Job did not rest in his own utterance "Behold, I am vile;" but in God's declaration, "I have found a ransom." Isaiah did not build upon a "Woe is me!" but upon "This hath touched thy lips." Peter did

not find relief in his own exclamation, "I am a sinful man;" but upon those two sweet and soothing words of Jesus, "Fear not."

All this is most true. Far from us be the thought of leading any soul to build upon its exercises, how deep, real, and spiritual soever such exercises may be. No, we must build *only* and altogether on Christ. "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a *tried* stone, a *precious* corner stone, a *sure* foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste." (Is. xxviii. 16.) This "stone" is not an exercise of any sort. It is not even the work of the Holy Ghost, essential as that is. It is not even the Holy Ghost Himself. It is the One to which the Holy Ghost ever delights to bear witness, even Christ who is the "tried," the "precious," the "sure foundation," who died for our sins, according to the scriptures, and rose again for our justification, according to the scriptures.

Still, while we not only fully admit, but earnestly and constantly insist upon all this, we must, nevertheless, be allowed to give expression to our deep and ever deepening sense of the value of a profound work of the Spirit of God in the soul. We fear there is an appalling amount of unbroken material to be found in the ranks of christian profession; a quantity of truth floating about, as so much unpractical and uninfluential theory, in the region of the intellect; a large amount of mental traffic in unfelt truth; a great deal of what is awfully unreal. We question if, in very many cases—alas! alas! how many!—the head is not far in advance of the heart—the mind more at work than the conscience. This is the secret of much of the unreality, the hollowness, and the inconsistency so grievous to contemplate. We are convinced of this; and hence it is that we so earnestly desire to deal faithfully with the heart and conscience of the reader. He need not be the least afraid to look this weighty matter straight in the face. Let him not be afraid of the knife. Let him beware of mere

intellectualism, which, we feel persuaded, is doing more than we are aware of to bring about the temporary reign of superstition and infidelity.

We shall now proceed, in the second place, to consider for a few moments

THE OBJECT UNFOLDED.

And, inasmuch as pointed reference has already been made to Isaiah and Peter—a prophet of the Old Testament times, and an apostle of the New, we can hardly do better than to look at the mode in which our thesis is illustrated in the history of these two remarkable men. And, first, let us contemplate the case of Isaiah the prophet. We have seen, in his case, how the need was created; let us now consider how the object was revealed.

No sooner had the convicted soul given utterance to the cry, "Woe is me! for I am undone," than the angelic messenger was despatched, with all the earnestness and energy of divine love, from the very throne of the eternal thrice holy Jehovah. "Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." Is. vi. 6, 7.

Now, there are two things, in the foregoing quotation, demanding our attention, namely, first, the *substance*, and, secondly, the *style* of the action recorded. The substance is the thing that was done; the style is the way of doing it. The prophet had been led to see himself in the light which emanated from the throne of God. This was a serious moment. It could not possibly be otherwise. It is deeply solemn to be brought to the discovery of what we are, as in the presence of God. When so brought, nothing but divine provision can meet our need—nothing but a divine object can satisfy the heart. Had Isaiah seen only the

throne, his condition would have been hopeless. But there was the *altar* as well, and here lay the secret of life and salvation for him as for every other convicted and self-destroyed sinner. If the throne had its claims, the altar had its provision. The one stood over against the other—two prominent figures in this most sublime vision—two grand realities in the glorious economy of divine grace. The light of the throne revealed the sinner's guilt; the grace of the altar removed it.

And, most assuredly, nothing else could have done for Isaiah—nothing else for the reader. It must be this in every case. The measure may vary; but the great fact is the same always. "Woe is me!" and "This hath touched thy lips," must go together. The former is the effect of the throne; the latter, the fruit of the altar. That is the need created; this, the object revealed. Nothing can be more simple, nothing more blessed. It is only the One who creates the need that can unfold the object to meet it; the former He does by the action of *truth*; the latter, by the provision of *grace*.

"This hath touched thy lips." Mark the words, reader! Note them carefully. See that you understand their force, their meaning, and their application to thyself. "*This*"—what is it? It is the provision—the rich, ample, perfect provision of divine grace. It has wrapped up in its comprehensive folds all that a poor guilty, hell-deserving, broken-hearted sinner can need to meet his guilt and ruin. It is not anything from within, but something from without. It is not a process—it is not an exercise—it is not a feeling; it is a divine provision to meet the sinner's deepest need, to remove his guilt, to hush his fears, to save his soul. All was contained in that mysterious "live coal from off the altar."

We may have occasion to recur to this scene again, in connection with the last point in our subject, namely, the soul's taking hold of the object. We shall, here, just

refer, for a moment, to the style of that wonderful action which spoke peace to the troubled soul of Isaiah. There is no one who is not conscious of the immense power of style over the heart. Indeed, we may almost say that the style of an action is more influential than the substance. And is it not most blessed to know that our God has His own peculiar style? Truly so. Adored for ever be His holy Name, He not only meets our need, but He does it in such a way as to let us know, without a shadow of a doubt, that "His whole heart and his whole soul" are in the act. He not only pardons our sins, but does it after such a fashion as to convince our souls that it is His own richest joy to do it.

Now, it seems to us that the style of the divine action, in Isaiah vi. shines forth in that little word "*flew*." It is as though God was in haste to apply the divine balm to a wounded spirit. Not a moment was to be lost. That bitter cry, "Woe is me!" coming forth, as it did, from the very depths of a sinner's broken heart, had gone straight up to the very ear and the very heart of God; and, with the intense rapidity of a seraph's wing, must a divine response be sent from the sanctuary of God to purge the convicted conscience and tranquillize the troubled heart.

Such is the way of our God—such the manner of His love—such the style of His grace. He not only saves us, but He does it in such a way as to assure our hearts that it makes Him far happier to save us than it makes us to be saved. The poor legal, doubting, reasoning heart may ofttimes be full of fear as to how God will deal with us. Spite of all the precious assurances of His love, all the proofs of His mercy and goodness, all the pledges of His readiness to save and bless, still the heart doubts and hangs back; still it refuses to listen to that voice of love uttering itself in ten thousand touching and eloquent strains; still it proves its readiness to lend a willing ear to the dark suggestions of the arch enemy—to its own

wretched reasonings—to anything and everything, in short, but the whispers of divine love. In vain does a Saviour God stand before the sinner, beseeching him to come; in vain does He open His very heart to the sinner's view, "shewing his thoughts how kind they be;" in vain He points to the sacrifice of His own providing—the Lamb of His free giving—the Son of His bosom—still the heart *will* harbour its dark and depressing suspicions—it *will* not give God credit for love so full so free—it *will* not admit that God delights to save, delights to bless, delights to make us happy.

Oh! beloved reader, say, art thou a doubter? Dost thou still hang back? Dost thou still continue to wrong and wound that deep, tender, marvellous love of God that stopped not short of giving His only begotten Son from His bosom, and bruising Him on Calvary's cursed tree? Why, oh why, dost thou hesitate? What art thou waiting for? What more dost thou want? Say not, we beseech thee, "I cannot believe. I would if I could; but I cannot. I am waiting for power." Hear these words, "If we receive the testimony of man, the testimony of God is greater." Hast thou not, many a time, received the testimony, the record, the witness of man? If thou wert to tell a fellow mortal that thou couldst not believe him, what would he say to thee? Would he not tell thee thou wert giving him the lie? Wilt thou make God a liar? Thou hast done it long enough. Do it no longer, we beseech thee; but come *now*, just as thou art, and behold the manner of the love of God—its substance and its style. Come *now*, with all your guilt, all your wretchedness, all your misery, all your need, and thou wilt find, in that object which God unfolds in His word, all you can need for time and eternity; and not only so, but you will receive a welcome as hearty as the God of all grace can give—Do come!

(To be concluded in our next, if the Lord will.)

A FOURTH LETTER TO A FRIEND ON THE WORK OF EVANGELIZATION.

July, 1869.

DEAREST A——,

When I took up my pen to address you, in the month of April last, I had no idea that I should have occasion to extend the series to a fourth letter. However, the subject is one of intense interest to me; and there are just two or three points further on which I desire very briefly to touch in this my closing letter.

And, in the first place, I deeply feel our lack of a prayerful spirit in carrying on the work of evangelization. I have referred to the subject of the Spirit's work; and also to the place which God's word ought ever to get; but it strikes me we are very deficient in reference to the matter of earnest, persevering, believing prayer. This is the true secret of power. "We," says the apostle, "will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

Here is the order: "Prayer and the ministry of the word." Prayer brings in the power of God, and this is what we want. It is not the power of eloquence, but the power of God, and this can only be had by waiting upon Him. "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall; but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint." Isaiah xl. 29—31.

It seems to me, dearest A., that we are far too mechanical, if I may so express myself, in the work. There is too much of what I may call going through a service. I greatly fear that some of us are more on our legs than on our knees: more in the railway carriage than in the closet; more on the

road than in the sanctuary; more before men than before God. This will never do. It is impossible that our preaching can be marked by power and crowned with results, if we fail in waiting upon God. Look at the blessed Master Himself—that great Workman. See how often He was found in prayer. At His baptism; at His transfiguration; previous to the appointment and mission of the twelve. In short, again and again, we find that blessed One in the attitude of prayer. At one time, He rises up a great while before day, in order to give Himself to prayer. At another time He spends the entire night in prayer, because the day was given up to work.

What an example for us! May we follow it! May we know a little better what it is to agonize in prayer. How little we know of this! I speak for myself. It sometimes appears to me as if we were so much taken up with preaching engagements that we have no time for prayer—no time for closet work—no time to be alone with God. We get into a sort of whirl of public work, we rush from place to place, from meeting to meeting, in a prayerless, barren condition of soul. Need we wonder at the little result? How could it be otherwise when we so fail in waiting upon God? We cannot convert souls. God alone can do this; and if we go on without waiting on Him, if we allow public preaching to displace private prayer, we may rest assured our preaching will prove barren and worthless. We really must "give ourselves to prayer" if we would succeed in the "ministry of the word."

Nor is this all. It is not merely that we are lacking in the holy and blessed practice of private prayer. This is alas! too true, as I have said. But there is more than this. We fail in our public meetings for prayer. The great work of evangelization is not sufficiently remembered at our prayer meetings. It is not definitely, earnestly, and constantly kept before God in our public reunions. It may occasionally be introduced in a cursory, formal

manner, and then dismissed. Indeed I feel there is a great lack of earnestness and perseverance in our prayer meetings generally, not merely as to the work of the gospel, but as to other things as well. There is frequently great formality and feebleness. We do not seem like men in earnest. We lack the spirit of the widow in Luke xviii., who overcame the unjust judge by the bare force of her importunity. We seem to forget that God will be enquired of; and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

It is of no use for any one to say, "God can work without our earnest pleading; He will accomplish His purposes; He will gather out His own." We know all this; but we know also that He who has appointed the end has appointed the means; and if we fail in waiting on Him, He will get others to do His work. The work will be done, no doubt, but we shall lose the dignity, the privilege, and the reward of working. Is this nothing? Is it nothing to be deprived of the sweet privilege of being coworkers with God, of having fellowship with Him in the blessed work which He is carrying on? Alas! alas! that we prize it so little. Still we do prize it; and perhaps there are few things in which we can more fully taste this privilege than in united earnest prayer. Here every saint can join. Here all can add their cordial Amen. All may not be preachers; but all can pray—all join in prayer—all can have fellowship.

And do you not find, beloved brother, that there is always a stream of deep and real blessing where *the assembly* is drawn out in earnest prayer for the gospel, and for the salvation of souls? I have invariably seen it, and hence it is always a source of unspeakable comfort, joy, and encouragement to my heart when I see the assembly stirred up to pray, for then I am sure God is going to give copious showers of blessing.

Moreover, when this is the case—when this most excel-

lent spirit pervades the whole assembly, you may be sure there will be no trouble as to what is called "The responsibility of the preaching." It will be all the same who does the work, provided it is done as well as it can be. If the assembly is waiting upon God, in earnest intercession, for the progress of the work, it will not be a question as to the one who is to take the preaching, provided Christ is preached and souls are blessed.

Then, dearest A., there is another thing which has, of late, occupied my mind a good deal, and that is our method of dealing with young converts. Most surely there is immense need of care and caution, lest we be found accrediting what is not the genuine work of God's Spirit at all. There is very great danger here. The enemy is ever seeking to introduce spurious materials into the assembly, in order that he may mar the testimony and bring discredit upon the truth of God.

All this is most true, and demands our serious consideration. But does it not seem to you, beloved, that we often err on the other side? Do we not often, by a stiff and peculiar style, cast a chill upon young converts? Is there not frequently something repulsive in our spirit and deportment? We expect young Christians to come up to a standard of intelligence which has taken us years to attain. Nor this only. We sometimes put them through a process of examination which only tends to harass and perplex.

Now, assuredly, this is not right. The Spirit of God would never puzzle, perplex, or repulse a dear anxious enquirer—never—no never. It could never be according to the mind or heart of Christ to chill the spirit of the very feeblest lamb in all His blood-bought flock. He would have us seeking to lead them on gently and tenderly —to soothe, nourish, and cherish them, according to all the deep love of His heart. It is a great thing to lay ourselves out, and hold ourselves open to discern and appreciate the

work of God in souls, and not to mar it by placing our own miserable crotchets as stumbling-blocks in their pathway. We need divine guidance and help in this as much as in any other department of our work. But, blessed be God, He is sufficient for this as for all beside. Let us only wait on Him—let us cling to Him, and draw upon His exhaustless treasury for each case as it arises—for exigence of every hour. He will never fail a trusting, expectant, dependent heart.

I must now close this series of letters. I think I have touched most, if not all, of the points which I had in my mind. You will, I trust, bear in mind, beloved in the Lord, that I have, in all these letters, simply jotted down my thoughts in the utmost possible freedom, and in all the intimacy of true brotherly friendship. I have not been writing a formal treatise, but pouring out my heart to a beloved friend and yoke-fellow. This must be borne in mind by all who may read these letters.

May God bless you and keep you, dearest A.! May He crown your labours with His richest and best blessings! May He keep you from every evil work, and preserve you unto His own everlasting kingdom!

Ever, believe me,
My dearest A.,
Your deeply affectionate

* * *

"Quick and powerful is the word,
'Sharper than a two-edged sword;'
Wielded by the Spirit's hand,
Nothing can its force withstand.

How its power was felt of old,
They who felt its power have told;
Many were the wonders wrought,
Multitudes to Jesus brought.

Mighty God! whose word it is
Hear our prayer and grant us this—
What thy power has done before,
By thy Spirit do once more."

SHORT PAPERS ON CHURCH HISTORY;

&c., &c., &c.

THE TWELVE APOSTLES.

Simon Peter, Andrew, James and John (sons of Zebedee), Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James (the son of Alpheus), Thaddeus, Simon Zelotes, Matthias, who was chosen in place of Judas Iscariot. See Matthew x.; Luke vi.; Mark iii.

Paul was also an apostle by the Lord's direct call, and that in the highest sense, as we have seen. There were others who were called apostles, but they were more especially the apostles of the churches. The twelve, and Paul, were pre-eminently the apostles of the Lord. Compare 2 Cor. viii. 23; Phil. ii. 25; Rom. xvi. 7.

The official name, "apostle," signifies "one sent forth." "These twelve Jesus *sent forth*." This name was given to the twelve by the Lord Himself. "He called unto him his disciples; and of them he chose twelve, whom also he called apostles." A personal acquaintance with the whole ministerial course of the Lord, was the original and a necessary qualification of an apostle. This was stated by Peter before the election of a successor to the traitor Judas. "Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection." By this close personal intercourse with the Lord, they were particularly suited to be the witnesses of His earthly path. He describes them Himself as "they which have continued with me in my temptations." Luke xxii. 28.

The *number* twelve, we believe, distinctly marks their relation to the twelve tribes of Israel. The fancies of the Fathers, as to the meaning of the *number* here chosen, shew

how little their minds were governed by the immediate context. St. Augustine "thinks our Lord herein had respect to the four quarters of the world, which were to be called by the preaching of the gospel, and which, being multiplied by three, as denoting the Trinity, make twelve." From not seeing the distinction between Israel and the Church, there is no end of confusion in such writers.

The number twelve in scripture, we understand to mean, *administrative completeness in man.* Hence the twelve tribes, and the twelve apostles, and the promise to the latter, that they should sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. (Matt. xix. 28.) But here, in plainest terms, the Lord limits the mission of the twelve to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. They were not even to visit the Samaritans, nor to go in the way of the Gentiles. The mission was strictly Jewish. "These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Surely nothing could possibly be plainer. The calling out of the Church is not here referred to. That took place after, when another and an extraordinary apostle was chosen, and with a special view to the Gentiles. *Then* the twelve would have their own place in the Church, but Paul was its divinely called and qualified minister.

The general notion that the twelve were altogether illiterate, we cannot agree with. The expression "unlearned and ignorant men," as used by the council in Acts iv. 13, we understand as simply denoting persons in private stations of life, who had not been taught in the rabbinical learning and traditions of the Jews. Our term "laymen" would convey the same idea; that is, men of ordinary education, as contrasted with those who have been specially trained in the schools of the learned; or, men not in "holy orders." But Peter and John may have been thoroughly acquainted with the holy scriptures, and with the history of

their country and people, and yet be considered by the council as "unlearned and ignorant men." James and John at least had all the advantages of a godly and devoted mother's training, which has often done great things for the Church of God.

We will now glance briefly at the twelve, and first in order is the apostle

PETER. There can be no doubt that Peter held the first place among the twelve. The Lord gave him this place. He is first named in every list of the apostles. This precedence, we know, did not arise from his having known the Lord first. He was neither first nor last in this respect. Andrew, and probably John, knew the Lord before Peter. Let us here note, with deepest interest, the first meeting of those friends who were to be united for ever. See John i. 29—51.

John the Baptist bears testimony to Jesus as the Lamb of God who was to take away the sin of the world. Two of John's disciples leave him and go with Jesus. "One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, *We have found the Messias*, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus." This was Peter's first introduction to the Lord—to one who was to be the source of his happiness for ever. And how significant their first interview! "And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, a stone." Naturally impulsive—quick in seizing an object, but too ready to relinquish it by the force of another impression—the Lord in grace gives him *firmness*; though every now and then his natural character shines out.

The first thing that brings Peter into great prominence is his noble confession of Christ, as the Son of the living God. (Matt. xvi.) The Lord then honoured him with the

keys of the kingdom of heaven, and gave him the chief place among his brethren. But this part of Peter's history, with some of the early chapters of the Acts, we have already considered; therefore we will only refer to what has not been touched upon.

The fourth chapter of the Acts we have not yet alluded to; and we are disposed to think that it presents the brightest day in the apostle's history, as the baptism of Cornelius presents the crowning day in his ministry. As there is often displayed in the great apostle a mixture of strength and weakness, of excellencies and defects; it is deeply interesting to trace his path through the first storms which assailed the infant Church. But we must not forget that the grand secret of the boldness, wisdom, and power of the apostles, was not owing to their natural character, but to the presence of the Holy Ghost. He was *with* them and *in* them, and working *by* them. The Holy Ghost was the strength of their testimony.

Notice in particular the blessed effects of His presence in *four* distinct aspects. 1. In the *courage* displayed by Peter and the others. "Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people and elders of Israel; if we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole, be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." The great and solemn question between God and the rulers of Israel is here *formally stated.* Nothing can be plainer. The testimony of God is no longer with the rulers of the temple, but with the apostles of the exalted Messiah.

2. In His presence *with* the disciples as an assembly. "And when they had prayed the place was shaken where they were assembled together, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word with boldness." This verse clearly teaches what has been so often said, as to the Spirit being *with* the disciples and *in* them. The place was *shaken* where they were assembled together; this proves His presence *with* them. But they were also *filled* with the Holy Ghost—so filled, we believe, that, for the time being, there was no room for the flesh to act.

3. In *great power* as to service. "And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and great grace was upon them all." Readiness and energy now characterize the apostles.

4. In whole-hearted *devotedness*. "As many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet." In the second chapter, the rich gave to the poor themselves: a thing which can scarcely be done without adding importance to the giver. But in the fourth chapter, the rich laid their money at the apostles' feet. This fact we would accept as a sure sign of increased humility, and of greater devotedness.

It is also in this full and instructive chapter that we have the famous answer of Peter and John to the council. "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye." From that day until now, the true confessors of the name of Jesus have found in these words a suitable answer to their inquisitors and oppressors. What a difference, we may exclaim, between the man who sat by the fire in the hall of the high priest, and the man who takes the lead in the fourth of the Acts —between the man who fell before the assault of a maid, and the man who makes a nation tremble with his appeals! But how is the difference to be accounted for? some may

ask. The presence and power of an ungrieved, unquenched Holy Spirit explains it fully. And the weakness or power of many in our day, is to be accounted for on the same principle. The Spirit of God alone is power in the Christian. May we know the blessedness of living, walking, working, in the saving and sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit! "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." Eph. iv. 30.

We are now come to the last section in the sacred narrative of the history of Peter. From verse 32 of chapter ix. to verse 18 of chapter xi., we have an account of his preaching, and working miracles. There we see him once more in full apostolic authority, and the Holy Ghost working with him. His mission at this time was greatly blessed, both in the towns of Israel, and at Cesarea. The whole town of Lydda and the district of Saron appear to have been awakened. The miracles which Peter wrought, and the gospel which he preached, were used of God for the conversion of many. Thus we read, "And all that dwelt at Lydda and Saron turned to the Lord." The blessing was general. "Turning to the Lord," is the scriptural idea of conversion. And at Joppa also, through the raising of Dorcas, there was a great stir and great blessing. "Many believed in the Lord throughout all Joppa."

In the tenth chapter—which we have already considered—the Gentiles are brought into the Church. And now, Peter having finished his mission in these quarters, he returns to Jerusalem. After the account of his deliverance from the power of Herod in the twelfth chapter, we have no continuous history of the apostle of the circumcision.

As Herod Agrippa, the Idumean King, comes so prominently before us here, it may be well to notice the part he takes. He professed great zeal for the law of Moses, and maintained a certain respect towards its outward observance. He was therefore ready with a pretended pious zeal

to side with the Jews against the disciples of Christ. This was his policy. He was a type of the adversary king.

It was about A.D. 44 that Herod sought to ingratiate himself with his Jewish subjects, by persecuting the unoffending Christians. Not that there was any love between Herod and the Jews, for they hated each other heartily; but here they united, as both hating the heavenly testimony. Herod killed James with the sword and cast Peter into prison. It was his wicked intention to keep him there till after the Passover, and then, when a great many Jews from all parts would be in Jerusalem, to make a public spectacle of his execution. But God preserved and delivered his servant, in answer to the prayers of the saints. They have weapons of warfare which the governments of this world know nothing of. God allowed James to seal his testimony with his blood; but Peter He preserved for further testimony on the earth. Thus our God rules over all. He is the Governor among the nations, whatever the pride and will of man may be. Power belongeth unto Him. Feeble indeed is the power of every enemy when He interferes. Herod being baffled and confounded by the manifestation of a power which he could not understand, he condemns the keepers of the prison to death, and leaves Jerusalem. But he little thought that his own death was to precede that of his prisoner's.

At Cesarea, the Gentile seat of his authority, he ordered a splendid festival in honour of the Emperor Claudius. Multitudes, we are informed, of the highest rank flocked from all quarters. On the second morning of the festivities the king appeared in a silver robe of great splendour, which glittered with the rays of the sun, so as to dazzle the eyes of the whole assembly, and excite general admiration. When making an oration to the people from his throne some of his flatterers raised a shout, "It is the voice of a god!" In place of repressing this impious adulation, which spread through the theatre, Herod accepted it. But

a sense of God's judgment at that very moment seems to have pierced the heart of the king. In tones of deep melancholy, he said, "Your god will soon suffer the common lot of mortality." In the forcible language of scripture, it is said, "And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost." He was then seized with violent internal pains, and carried from the theatre to his palace. There he lingered five days, and died in the greatest agony, and in the most humiliating and loathsome state of body.

As it may not be out of place here, or uninteresting to our readers, we would notice for a moment, the HERODIAN *line of kings*. They frequently come before us, both in the life of our Lord, and in the early history of the Church. We have associated in our minds, from early youth, the *massacre of the infants of Bethlehem* and *Herod*, king of Judea: though it is somewhat remarkable that Josephus, the principal historian of Herod, takes no notice of this event. It is generally thought, that the murder of a few children, in an obscure village, compared with Herod's other deeds of blood, was too unimportant in the eyes of Josephus to be recorded. But not so in the mind of God. Both the deceit and cruelty of the treacherous heart of the king are recorded in the sacred narrative. The eye of God watched over the "Child born" unto Israel—the only source of hope for all nations. The cruel design of Herod was thus defeated.

HEROD THE GREAT, the first Idumean king over Israel, received the kingdom from the senate of Rome through the influence of Mark Antony. This took place about thirty-five years before the birth of Christ, and about thirty-seven before his own death. These Idumeans were a branch of the ancient Edomites, who, while the Jews were in the Babylonish captivity, and their land lay desolate, took possession of as much of the

southern part of it, as contained what had been the whole inheritance of the tribe of Simeon, and also half of that which had been the inheritance of the tribe of Judah; and there they dwelt ever after. In course of time, the Idumeans were conquered by John Hyrcanus, and brought over to Judaism. After their conversion, they received circumcision, submitted to the Jewish laws, and became incorporated with the Jewish nation. In this way they became Jews, though not of the ancient stock of Israel. This happened about one hundred and twenty-nine years before Christ.* They were bold, crafty, and cruel as princes: they had great political foresight, courted the favour of Rome, and cared only for the establishment of their own dynasty. But, as God would have it, with the destruction of Jerusalem, the Idumean dynasty passed away, and even the very name of Herod seems to have perished from among the nations.

Besides the slaughter of the children in Bethlehem, which took place shortly before Herod's death, he had deeply embrued his hands in the blood of his own family, and in the blood of many noble persons of the Asmonean line. His cruel jealousy towards that heroic family never slumbered. But one of his last acts was to sign the death-warrant of his own son. When dying under the signal judgment of God, like his grandson, Herod Agrippa, he raised himself up in his bed, gave the mandate for the execution of Antipater, named Archelaus as his successor to the throne, fell back, and expired.

Thus, alas, have monarchs often died: dispensing death on the one hand, and kingdoms on the other. But, what then? In the naked reality of their own moral condition they must stand before the tribunal of God. The purple can no longer shield them. Inflexible righteousness rules on that throne. Judged according to the deeds done in the

* "Lardner's Works," vol. i.

body, they must be banished beyond the "*gulf*" which God's judgment has "*fixed*" for ever. But, oh! there to remember, in torment, every moment of their past history —the privileges they have abused, the opportunities they have lost, and all the evil they have done. May the Lord save every soul that glances at these pages, from the awful weight of these words—*remember—tormented—fixed.* They describe and characterize the future state of impenitent souls. Luke xvi.

The sect of the HERODIANS may have been the partizans of Herod, and chiefly political in their character; their main object being the maintenance of the national independence of the Jews, in the face of Roman power and ambition. They may have thought to use Herod for the accomplishing of this end. In the gospel history they are represented as acting *craftily* towards the blessed Lord, and in concert with the Pharisees. Matthew xxii. 15, 16. Mark xii. 13, 14.

"BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT."

FILLED! yea, filled to overflowing,
Gracious Spirit! what so precious to my soul
As Thy sweet presence? What so effectual
To exclude all else—the strivings
Of this "present evil world," "the flesh," "the devil"
All so ready to intrude upon the heart
Which Thou alone shouldst fill?
Oh, fill, fill, fill my soul,
Leaving no room for aught beside
The ever-living energizing power sent from above
To reign within the temple built for thine abode!
Why shouldst Thou ever,
Grieved or quenched by me lie dormant?
Forbid it, that I should not watch or wait
The coming of the glorious One,
Who promises to make us like unto Himself
On that, to us, bright resurrection morn,
When "we shall see him as he is."

A. M. H.

CORRESPONDENCE.

80. "J. B.," Manchester. We could not think of inserting such an article in our pages. We presume you are aware that we are not responsible to return rejected MSS.

81. "G.," Belfast. It would not be for edification to discuss your question in our pages. Ever since we commenced to issue this Magazine we have confined ourselves to articles bearing upon the conversion and edification of precious souls; and by the grace of God nothing shall induce us to swerve from these objects. Hence, therefore, our friends will oblige us by refraining altogether from sending us questions of a controversial nature, as we shall, most certainly, leave them wholly unnoticed. No doubt, controversy has its value, but we do not feel ourselves called to it.

82. "G. R.," London, Your lines have come to hand. They do not suit us exactly.

83. "One Deaf," Woolwich. Your deafness is no hindrance to your being at the table of your Lord. You can shew forth His death, although you are unable to hear a human voice. "As oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." As to the subject of baptism, we should recommend you to study the New Testament on the subject, and ask the Lord to teach you His mind in the matter; and the moment you see His mind, arise and do it.

84. J. B.," Toronto. It is always well to watch our treacherous hearts, even in right things, lest they betray us. But, in the matter to which you refer, we would remind you, beloved, of the exceeding goodness and tenderness of our God. He most graciously allows us to pour out our hearts to Him in the freest manner. He perfectly understands our every feeling, and He knows all about our relationships and the right affections which flow out of them. It would be unnatural not to feel peculiar earnestness in reference to the salvation of our kinsmen according to the flesh. Unquestionably, we should seek to be ruled, in all things, by the glory of God. But oh! let us ever abide in the sweet sense of His love, and let us beware of a morbid analyzing of our poor thoughts and feelings. God bless you and keep you!

85. "J. D.," Cathcart. We most fully enter into your feelings on the subject to which you call our attention: but we must beg of you to excuse our discussing the question. So many of God's beloved saints differ so widely in their

views of this subject that great modesty and moderation become us, how decided soever we may feel in our own minds.

86. "A Brother," Worcestershire. In Philippians i. 22, we understand the apostle to mean that the longer he remained down here the more fruit of his labours he should have. There must be some mistake in your second question, there is nothing about an instrument of death in Luke xxii. 26. to which you refer. As to your third query, which is too long to transcribe, we can truly answer in the affirmative.

87. "J. H." We cannot see the force of your question at all. God made man upright. He created him in innocence. He made him after His own image. But man sinned, and was driven out of Paradise, and the way was barred against his return that way. Adam became the head of a race after his fall. He was the fallen head of a fallen race. But Christ, the Second Man, the Lord from heaven, the Last Adam, has become in resurrection the Head of a new race. Scripture speaks of these two men —two heads; and teaches that, by nature, we stand connected with the first man; by grace, we stand connected with the Second. We are born into this world as members of the first head; we are born again, by the word and Spirit of God, as members of the Second. As to the distinction between the soul and the body we cannot see the sense of it.

88. "F. B.," Brantford, Ontario. We can see no objection to a sister's asking a question in such a meeting as you describe, That a woman is not to teach in the assembly, or to usurp authority over the man, scripture most distinctly and unequivocally declares. But the meeting you describe is not a meeting of the assembly; and asking a question, if it be merely to obtain information, and not *indirectly* to impart it, is not teaching or usurping authority. Accept our warmest thanks for your truly kind letter. May the Lord abundantly bless you both and all His people, His servants, and His work around you!

89. "T. B.," Donegal. Your letter has reached us in the midst of much pressure. We can merely acknowledge the receipt of it in this month's issue, and hope to notice it more fully in our next. In the meantime, we commend you earnestly and affectionately to the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls. May He keep you in the blessed shelter of His own presence, and lead you into a plain path for His Name and glory's sake!

THE WORK OF GOD IN THE SOUL.

(Part iv.)

For further illustration of our theme, we may refer, for a moment, to the case of Peter, at the lake of Gennesaret, as recorded in the opening paragraph of the fifth of Luke. He, too, like the prophet Isaiah, was made to feel his need —his deep, deep need. The same convicting light which had entered the soul of the prophet, here penetrates the heart of the future apostle, and elicits those earnest words, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

Here we have the need created, the sense of guilt produced. But mark, in passing, the strange yet lovely inconsistency! Peter has not the least idea of making his escape from the light which had shone upon him; nay, he actually draws nearer and nearer to it. He felt he had no right to be there, and yet he would not, for worlds, be anywhere else. And why? Because, mingled with that powerful convicting *light*, there was the equally powerful converting *grace* which irresistibly drew the heart of the "sinful man" toward itself. "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." "And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, *full* of grace and truth." (John i.) What could be more suited to a man full of sin, than a Saviour full of grace? Surely nothing and no one; for albeit that blessed Saviour was full of truth likewise—and truth puts everything and every one in the right place—yet the grace was amply sufficient to meet all the need which the truth revealed; and hence, although the poor convicted sinner cries out, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord," he nevertheless feels that the only place for him is "at Jesus' knees."

Now, we may remark, here, that it is ever thus, in cases of true conviction. In every instance in which the genuine

work of God's Spirit is wrought in the soul, we notice more or less of what we have ventured to designate this strange yet lovely inconsistency—this seeming contradiction—the striking phenomenon of a sinner confessing his utter unfitness to be in the presence of a holy God, and yet having a certain inward consciousness that it is the only place he can be in.

This is very beautiful, and touchingly interesting. It is the sure evidence of the work of God in the soul. There is the profound sense of sinfulness and guilt, and yet that marvellous and mysterious clinging of the heart to the One whose moral glory has humbled us in the dust. "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." But where were these glowing words uttered? At the knees of a Saviour-God. Blessed place! Did Peter imagine that Jesus was going to depart from him? Did he really think that the gracious One who had deigned to make use of his ship, and then given him such a miraculous draught of fish, would leave him in the depth of his misery? We do not and cannot believe it. Ah! no; the Spirit of God, in His most precious operations in the soul, always combines these two elements, namely, the consciousness of utter unworthiness, and an earnest clinging to, and breathing after Christ. The former is conviction; the latter conversion. By that, the furrow is made; by this, the seed deposited. In short, it is the need created, and the object revealed. The two things go together. As in the case of Isaiah, "Woe is me!" is instantly followed by "This hath touched thy lips;" so in the case of Peter, "Depart from me" is followed by the gracious words, "Fear not."

This is divine. The object revealed is perfectly adequate to meet the need created. It must be so, because the creation of the need, and the unfolding of the object, are both operations of one and the selfsame Spirit. And not only so, but the object so unfolded is found to be adequate to meet all the claims of God Himself, and therefore it must

be adequate to meet all the claims of the convicted and exercised soul. If God is satisfied with the Person and work of Christ, we may well be so likewise. How did Isaiah learn that he was undone? By *light* from on high. How did he learn that his sin was purged? By *grace* from on high. The selfsame revelation that shewed him his guilt shewed him also that his guilt was gone. He rested upon the testimony of God, and not upon his own feelings, frames, or notions. If at the close of the sublime scene recorded in chapter vi., any one had asked Isaiah, "How do you know that your sin is purged?" what would have been his reply? Would he have said, "I *feel* it is so?" We believe not. We are persuaded that this man of God rested upon something far better, far deeper, far more solid, than any mere feeling of his own mind. Doubtless he did feel. But why? Just because he did not make feeling the ground of his faith, but faith the ground of his feeling, and divine revelation the ground of his faith.

Such is the divine order, an order, alas! so constantly reversed, to the serious damage of souls, the subversion of their peace, and the dishonour of their Lord. When we turn to scripture—when we examine the various cases which it records for our learning, we invariably find the order to be, first, the word; secondly, faith; thirdly, feeling. On the other hand, when we turn to the history of souls, now-a-days, when we examine their exercises and experiences, we constantly find that they begin with their feelings, and, as a consequence, they rarely enjoy a right sense of the nature and foundation of true christian faith.

All this is greatly to be deplored. It claims the earnest attention of those who take an interest in souls, and are called to watch the progress of the work of God therein. It is of the very last importance to lead all exercised souls to the sure foundation of holy scripture, and to teach them that faith is simply taking God at His word; it is believing what He says, not because we feel it, but because He says

it. To believe because we feel, would not be faith in God's word at all, but faith in our own feelings, which is a worthless faith that will not stand for a moment in the presence of the enemy. The word of God is settled for ever in heaven. "He has magnified his word above all his name." This is the solid foundation of christian faith. True, it is by the Holy Ghost that the soul is led to rest on this foundation; but the foundation is scripture, and scripture alone. It is not feelings, frames, or experiences, but the plain testimony of holy scripture. "Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures; he was buried, and rose again the third day, according to the scriptures." Here lies the true foundation of christian faith—yea, of faith in all ages. Abraham believed God, and thus he found rest for his soul. So with Isaiah, so with Peter, so with all. Patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and saints of every age, every condition, and every clime rested upon the stable rock of divine revelation; and if the reader will only do the same, he will possess a peace which no power of earth or hell can ever disturb.

But we must draw this series of papers to a close, and this we shall do by a very brief reference, in the third and last place, to

THE OBJECT LAID HOLD OF.

We may be all the more brief on this point, as a good deal has already been said which, to a certain extent, bears upon it. But we would specially call attention to the practical results which are sure to follow, in some degree, in every case in which the soul lays hold of Christ. Our two examples, Isaiah and Peter, will serve us here as well as in the other branches of our subject.

No sooner was Isaiah's need met—his guilt purged, than we see in him a whole-hearted consecration of himself to God and His service which may well stir the very depths of the soul, and humble us too at the thought of how little we

imitate him therein. No sooner does he hear that Jehovah wants a messenger, than the ready response comes forth from his heart and expresses itself in those ardent accents, "*Here am I; send me.*" He was ready now to go forth in service to the One who had made him see his own ruin, and revealed also the divine remedy. The order is perfectly beautiful. We have, first, "Woe is me:" secondly, "This hath touched thy lips;" and, thirdly, "Here am I."

So also, in Peter's case, we have precisely the same lovely moral order, his "Depart from me" is followed by Christ's "Fear not." And then the practical result follows, "He forsook all, and followed him." This, truly, was a laying hold of the object. Peter evidently felt at this moment that Christ was worthy of all he was and all he had. In the early bloom of divine life in his soul, all was readily let go, secular occupations, however right in themselves, natural ties, however important, are all surrendered for the one absorbing object which had been revealed to, and laid hold of by, his new-born and emancipated soul. Christ was more to Peter than boats and nets, father and mother, sisters and brothers.

He forsook all. Nor was it difficult, in the verdure and freshness of first love, to let go those natural ties and occupations. The difficulty, at such a seraphic moment, would be to retain them, or cling to them. Alas! that we should ever have been called to hear from Peter's lips such words as these, "I go a fishing;" and that too after three years of marvellous companionship with that blessed One who had once commanded his whole moral being, and drawn him off from all earthly cares and natural relationships.

But we shall not, now, dwell upon this painful and humbling theme. We shall think of Peter at the lake of Gennesaret; we shall dwell upon the moments of his first love—those charming moments when Peter could, without reserve, say, "Jesus, my all in all thou art." This is what we all want to look to. We want to understand the real

secret—the mighty moral power—the true motive spring of all genuine devotedness and personal consecration. We want to bend our whole attention to this question, "How can I be most effectually drawn off from all those things which so readily and powerfully attract this vagrant volatile heart of mine?" What is the answer? Simply this—"Keep the heart fixed on Christ, filled with Christ, dedicated to Christ. Nothing else will do. Rules and regulations will not do; vows and resolutions will not avail. It must be 'The expulsive power of a new affection.'"

This is the grand *desideratum*—the special lack of our souls—the only effectual preservative against the ten thousand fascinations and allurements of the scene through which we are passing. The moment we begin to ask, "What harm is there in this or that?" it is all up with personal devotedness. Decline has set in, our hearts have got away from Christ. Peter, at the lake of Gennesaret, never thought of asking "What harm is there in fishing? What sin is there in boats and nets? Why should I not tarry with my father and friends?" There was no harm in fishing, nothing sinful in boats and nets, looked at in themselves. But why did Peter give them up? Because he was called to something better. He abandoned the inferior because he had laid hold of the superior. And we may rest assured of this that if ever Peter returned to the inferior again, it was only because the superior had, for the moment, lost its power over his heart.

But here we must pause. We had no intention of dwelling at such length upon the subject of "The work of God in the soul;" but we have found it intensely interesting, and we fondly hope it has not been wholly without profit to the reader.

Romans v. 1—11, is what God is in love to the sinner. Chapter viii. is the condition of the believer with God. Would you not like to feel better *in yourself?* That is "I."

THE PENZANCE LIFE-BOAT.

At the town of Penzance, on the coast of Cornwall, there is a very beautiful specimen of the patent self-adjusting life-boat—that marvellous provision made by the genius and benevolence of modern times, for the poor shipwrecked mariner. It is not now our purpose to enter upon a description of this magnificent structure. The reader can easily lay his hand upon some volume which will give him far more accurate and scientific information about it and other life-boats than we could attempt to offer. It is to a very melancholy incident in the history of the Penzance boat that we here desire to call the reader's attention.

Some time since, in one of those tremendous gales which occasionally visit our coast, a shipwreck occurred in the middle of the night. The signals of distress were heard, and speedily answered by the gallant crew of the Penzance life-boat. On reaching the wreck, a few miles from the town, they were called to witness a spectacle of unusual sadness. The captain of the ill-fated vessel, under the influence, no doubt, of ardent spirits, was standing amid the appalling scene, and, with oaths and imprecations refused to enter the life-boat—madly refused to avail himself of the messenger of mercy—of the kindly succour brought nigh to him, in the moment of imminent danger. And not only did he refuse to enter the life-boat himself; but, drawing out a revolver from his pocket, he threatened to shoot the first man who should dare to step from the sinking wreck on to the life-boat. Vain were the entreaties, the arguments, and the appeals of the coastguard men. The frantic captain, bent on his own and his fellows' destruction, obstinately refused to leave the wreck. Six of the ship's crew, either influenced by the captain's arguments, or terrified by his revolver, and perhaps themselves under the influence of drink, joined with him in his mad purpose not to enter the boat.

At length, the commander of the life-boat, sadly and reluctantly, issued the order to his men to row to shore with such of the ship's crew as had wisely consented to accompany him.

And now comes the heart-rending part of this sad tale. Far on in the night, that dark and stormy night, there was a momentary lull of the storm; the crew of the life-boat were still lingering on the shore, unwilling and unable to retire to rest amid such a scene of terror and danger, when lo! they heard the death-wail wafted across the surging waters, "Life-boat! Life-boat! Life-boat!"

Once more those gallant fellows pushed off and made for the wreck. But alas! it was "TOO LATE." The wretched captain and his six men had sunk beneath the boiling surf. They had, under the influence of a mad fatuity, refused the succour and safety which had been so generously brought to them and so earnestly pressed upon them; and when it was *too late*, they had vainly called for the rejected life-boat. They went down, and in a few hours their bodies were washed upon that very shore which they might have trodden in health and safety but for their own blindness and folly.

Reader, we need scarcely ask thee the question, "Of what does this sad tale remind thee?" It is too plain—too pointed—too telling to render any such question needful. Art thou unconverted, unsaved? Then remember thou art in thy sins, in thy guilt, and in imminent danger of the lake of fire. We do not want to write harsh things, or to indulge in vehement denunciation of wrath, judgment, and hell-fire. But we do want thee just to reflect for a few moments upon the affecting incident above recorded. Was not that captain—were not his men most culpable in refusing the life-boat? Dost thou not think that the agonizing cry of "Life-boat! Life-boat! Life-boat!" issued from hearts filled with bitter self-reproachings because of their stupid folly in having rejected the proffered aid?

No doubt it did. But oh! dear fellow sinner, remember that thou, too, art in a wreck, and in danger of sinking beneath the eternal surges of the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. And further remember that infinite love has brought near to you not merely a patent self-adjusting life-boat, but a divine and all-sufficient Saviour. God has given His Son from His bosom, He has bruised Him on the cursed tree for thy salvation. And now He beseeches you to come to Him—to step from the sinking wreck into the perfect life-boat in which you can never perish. Oh! do not refuse! do not hesitate! come now! come just as you are! Do not let any intoxicated captain, do not let your own heart persuade you to cling to the wreck. Listen to the voice of God—the voice of Jesus—the voice of the eternal Spirit, inviting, yea beseeching, you to come at once, and find safety and peace, salvation and refuge, in that blessed One who hung on the cross, was buried in the tomb, and is now on the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, exalted there as a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins to all who will only put their trust in Him.

Dear friend, be persuaded *now*, lest when it is too late thy death-wail may be heard issuing from the dark waters of death, calling out, "Life-boat! Life-boat! Life-boat!" What would those poor sailors have given for another opportunity of stepping into the life-boat? When, at length, they really awoke to a sense of their true position, and found the ship going down, with what transports of delight would they have hailed the vessel of mercy! But, oh! those awful words, "Too late! *too late!* TOO LATE!"

May God of His infinite mercy lead thee, beloved reader, this moment, to flee to Jesus, to turn thy back now, upon hell, and thy face to heaven. May He bless to thy precious soul this touching incident of the Penzance Life-boat!

SHORT PAPERS ON CHURCH HISTORY;

&c., &c., &c.

But we must now return to the history of our apostle.

In the fifteenth chapter of the Acts, after an absence of about five years, Peter again appears; but during that time we know nothing of his abode or of his work. He takes an active part in the assembly at Jerusalem, and seems to have retained his original place among the apostles and elders.

Soon after this, as we learn from Galatians ii. he paid a visit to Antioch. But notwithstanding the decision of the apostles and Church at Jerusalem, a characteristic weakness of Peter's betrays him into an act of dissimulation. It is one thing to settle a question in principle, it is quite another to carry it out in practice. Peter had actually stated in the assembly before them all, that the gospel which Paul had preached, by the revelation given to him, was no less a blessing to the Jew than to the Gentile. And while *alone* at Antioch, he acted on this principle, walking in the liberty of the heavenly truth and eating with the Gentiles. But when certain Jewish minded Christians came down from James, he no longer dared to use this liberty—"He withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation." "What a poor thing is man!" exclaims one. "And we are weak in proportion to our importance before men; when we are nothing, we can do all things, as far as human opinion is concerned ..... Paul, energetic and faithful, through grace, alone remains upright; and he rebukes Peter before them all."

From this time, A.D. 49 or 50, his name does not again appear in the Acts of the Apostles; and we have no certain

knowledge of the sphere of his labours. But, as he inscribes his first epistle to the Hebrew Christians, "scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia," he is supposed to have laboured in these countries. His second epistle is of a much later date, and must have been written shortly before his death. This we learn from what he says in the first chapter: "Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me." See John xxi. 18, 19.

The exact date of Peter's visit to Rome has been a subject of great controversy between Catholic and Protestant writers in all ages. But it may now be considered as a settled point, that he did not visit that city till near the end of his life. The date of his martyrdom is also uncertain. Most probably it took place about A.D. 67 or 68, and about the seventieth year of his age. The burning of Rome by Nero is dated by Tacitus, about the month of July 64. The persecution against the Christians broke out soon after; and it was under this persecution that our apostle was honoured with the crown of martyrdom.

He was sentenced to be crucified, as the most severe and shameful death. But when he looked on the cross, he entreated the favour of the officers that he might not be crucified in the ordinary way, but that he might suffer with his head downwards: affirming that he was unworthy to suffer in the same posture as his blessed Lord and Master had done before him. His request being granted, he was crucified with his head downwards. Whether this be a fact or a mere legend, it well agrees with the fervent temperament and the deep humility of the great apostle.*

* See Cave's "Lives of the Apostles" Burton's "Ecclesiastical History." Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible."

In following the catalogue already given, we next notice the apostle

ANDREW. The sacred historian has been very full and copious in describing the acts of Peter, but very sparing in his accounts of his brother Andrew. He was brought up with Peter to his father's trade, and continued at his occupation until he was called by the Lord to become a "fisher of men."

Andrew, like other young men of Galilee, had become a disciple of John the Baptist. But on hearing his master a second time speak of Jesus as the Lamb of God, He left John to follow Jesus. He was, immediately after this, the means of bringing his brother Peter to his new master. So far, he has the honour of being the first of the apostles who preached Christ. (John i.) He comes before us in the sixth and in the twelfth of John, and in the thirteenth of Mark; but beyond these few scattered notices, scripture relates nothing concerning him. His name does not appear in the Acts of the Apostles, except in the first chapter.

Conjecture and tradition have said many things about him, but it is only of fairly established facts that we would speak. He is said to have preached in Scythia, and to have travelled over Thrace, Macedonia, Thessaly, and to have suffered martyrdom at Patrae in Achaia. His cross, it is said, was formed of two pieces of wood crossing each other in the middle, in the form of the letter ×, hence usually known by the name of St. Andrew's cross. He died praying and exhorting the people to constancy and perseverance in the faith. The year in which he suffered is uncertain.

From the two brothers, Peter and Andrew, we now proceed to the two brothers, James and John. The four had also been partners in business. And first in order we notice

JAMES. Zebedee and his two sons, James and John, were following their usual occupation on the Sea of Galilee, when Jesus passed that way. Seeing the two

brothers, "He called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him." Peter and Andrew were also there. It was on this occasion that the Lord desired Peter to launch out into deeper water, and try another cast for fish. Peter inclines to reason: they had been very unsuccessful the previous night. Nevertheless, at the Lord's word, the net was let down. "And when they had this done, they enclosed a great multitude of fishes; and their net brake." Astonished and overwhelmed at this draught, Peter beckoned to his partners to come and help in landing the fish caught.

Full conviction was now wrought in the minds of those four young men, that Jesus was the true Messiah. They may have had doubts before, they have none now. At the call of Jesus they leave all, and become, once and for ever, His disciples. Henceforward, they were to become "fishers of men." In every list we have of the apostles, these four noble men are placed first; they stand at the head of the twelve throughout. Matthew iv. 17—20; Mark i. 16—20; Luke v. 1—11.

This is the call of James to the *discipleship;* about a year after this he is called to the *apostleship* with his eleven brethren. Matthew x.; Mark iii.; Luke vi.; Acts i.

Peter, James, and John, and occasionally Andrew, were always the most intimate companions of the blessed Lord. The *first three* only were admitted to the raising of Jairus' daughter. (Mark v.; Luke viii.) The same three apostles were alone permitted to be present at the transfiguration. (Matt. xvii.; Mark ix.; Luke ix.) It was the same three that witnessed His agony in Gethsemane. (Matt. xxvi.; Mark xiv.; Luke xxii.) But the four, Peter, James, John, and Andrew, are joined together when they ask the Lord privately about the destruction of the temple. Mark xiii.

Like the change in Peter's name, or the addition to it, the sons of Zebedee are surnamed *Boanerges*, or, "the sons of thunder." Great boldness and faithfulness may

have singled out James to Herod, as the first to be seized and silenced. It is not a little remarkable that "the son of thunder" and "the rock-man" are the first to be apprehended. But James has the honour to be the first of the apostles that received the crown of martyrdom, A.D. 44. Peter was rescued by a miracle.

A mother's jealousy and her sons' ambition lead Salome to ask for very distinguished places in the kingdom for her two sons. The Lord allowed the petition to pass with a very mild reproof, but told the brothers that they should drink of His cup, and be baptized with His baptism. James was early called upon to realize this prediction. After the ascension he is seen in company with the other apostles in Acts i. And then he disappears from the sacred narrative, until his apprehension and death in Acts xii. And there we are simply told, in the brief language of the inspired historian, that Herod the king killed James the brother of John with the sword.

Clement of Alexandria, relates a tradition concerning James' martyrdom, which is not an unlikely thing to have occurred. As he was led forth to the place of martyrdom, the soldier or officer that had guarded him to the tribunal, or rather his accuser, was so moved by the courage and bold confession of James at the time of his trial, that he repented of what he had done, and came and fell down at the apostle's feet, and begged forgiveness for what he had said against him. James, after a little surprise at the thing, raised him up, embraced and kissed him; and said, "Peace, my son, peace be to thee, and the pardon of thy faults." Whereupon, before all, he publicly professed himself to be a Christian, and so both were beheaded at the same time. Thus fell James, the apostolic proto-martyr, cheerfully taking that cup which he had long since told his Lord that he was ready to drink of.*

* See Cave's "Life of St. James the Great."

JOHN—the son of Zebedee and Salome, and the younger brother of James. Though his father was a fisherman, it appears from the gospel narrative, that they were in good circumstances. Some of the ancients speak of the family as wealthy, and even as nobly connected. But these traditions are not reconcilable with the facts of scripture. We read, however, of their "hired servants," and they may have owned more vessels than one. And Salome, we doubt not, was one of those honoured women who ministered to the Lord of her substance. And John had a house of his own. (Luke viii. 3; John xix. 27.) We may safely infer from these facts, that their position was considerably above poverty. As many have gone to extremes in speaking of the apostles as *poor* and *illiterate*, we think it well to notice the few hints of scripture on these subjects.

Of the character of Zebedee, we know nothing. He made no objections to his sons leaving him at the call of the Messiah. But we hear no more of him afterwards. We frequently find the mother in company with her sons, but no mention of the father. The probability is that he died soon after the call of his sons.

The evangelist Mark, in enumerating the twelve apostles, chapter iii. 17; when he mentions James and John, says that our Lord "surnamed them Boanerges, which is, Sons of Thunder." What our Lord particularly intended to convey in this title, is not easily determined. Conjectures there have been many. Some suppose that it was because these two brothers were of a more furious and resolute disposition, and of a more fierce and fiery temper than the rest of the apostles. But we see no ground for such a conjecture in the gospel history. Doubtless, on one or two occasions their zeal was intemperate, but that was before they knew better. More probably our Lord so surnamed them, as prophetic of their burning zeal in openly and boldly proclaiming the great truths of the gospel, after they became fully acquainted with them. Certain we are, that

John in company with Peter, in the early chapters of the Acts, displayed a courage that feared no threatenings, and was daunted by no opposition.

John is supposed to have been the youngest of all the apostles; and, judging from his writings, he appears to have been possessed of a disposition singularly affectionate, mild, and amiable. He was characterized as "the disciple whom Jesus loved." On various occasions he was admitted to free and intimate intercourse with the Lord. John xiii.

"What distinguished John," says Neander, "was the union of the most opposite qualities, as we have often observed in great instruments of the advancement of the kingdom of God—the union of a disposition inclined to silent and deep meditation, with an ardent zeal, though not impelling to great and diversified activity in the outward world; not a passionate zeal, such as we suppose filled the breast of Paul before his conversion. But there was also a love, not soft and yielding, but one seizing with all its might, and firmly retaining the object to which it was directed—vigorously repelling whatever would disgrace this object, or attempt to wrest it from its possession; and this was his leading characteristic."

As the history of John is so intimately connected with the histories of Peter and James, which we have already gone over, we may now be very brief. These three names are seldom separated in the gospel history. But there is one scene in which John stands alone, and which ought to be noted. He was the only apostle who followed Jesus to the place of His crucifixion. And there he was specially honoured with the regard and confidence of his Master. "When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home." John xix. 26, 27.

After the ascension of Christ, and the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, John became one of the chief apostles of the circumcision. But his ministry goes down to the end of the first century. With his death the apostolic age naturally closes.

There is a widely spread and generally received tradition, that John remained in Judea till after the death of the virgin Mary. The date of this event is uncertain. But soon after he proceeded to Asia Minor. Here he planted and watched over several churches in different cities, but made Ephesus his centre. Thence he was banished to the Isle of Patmos, towards the close of Domitian's reign. There he wrote the Revelation. (chap. i. 9.) On his liberation from exile, by the accession of Nerva to the imperial throne, John returned to Ephesus, where he wrote his gospel and epistles. He died about A.D. 100, in the third year of the emperor Trajan, and about one hundred years of age.*

From the many traditions about John himself, we select only one, which we think the most interesting, and the most likely to be true. As one who was unwearied in his love and care for the souls of men, he was deeply grieved by the apostasy of a young man in whom he had taken a special interest. When revisiting the place where he left him, he heard that he had joined a band of robbers and had become their captain. His love for him was so great that he determined to find him out. He hastened to the retreat of the robbers, suffered himself to be seized, and begged to be taken into their captain's presence. When he saw the venerable appearance of the aged apostle, his conscience was awakened. The recollection of earlier days was more than he could stand, and he fled in consternation from his presence. But John, full of paternal love, hastened after him. He entreated him to repent and return to the

* See Horne's "Introduction to the New Testament."

Church, and encouraged him by the assurance of the forgiveness of his sins in the name of the Lord Jesus. His marvellous affection for the young man, and his deep concern for his soul, completely overcame him. He repented, returned, was restored, and afterwards became a worthy member of the christian community. May we seek to do likewise in restoring backsliders!

ABOVE IT ALL.

I SEE the crowds of earth go by,
I hear the world's loud trumpet call;
Though through its midst my path should lie,
Yet I must live above it all.

The sorrows of the daily life,
The shadows o'er my path which fall,
Too oft obscure the glory's light,
Until I rise above them all.

Until upon the mountain height,
I stand, my God! with Thee alone,
Bathed in the fullest clearest light—
The glory which surrounds the throne.

Here hushed are all the sounds of earth—
The laugh of pleasure, moan of pain:
The vain deluding shouts of mirth,
Here fall upon my ear in vain.

Calm in thy secret presence, Lord,
I rest this weary soul of mine;
Feed on the fulness of thy word,
And die to all the things of time.

Learning that word, so wondrous deep—
To live in joy and grief the same—
Weeping, as though we did not weep—
Gaining, as though we did not gain.

O take my fevered hands in thine,
And keep me, Master, nearer Thee,
Walking above the things of time
In closest fellowship with Thee.

With Thee, above the clouds and gloom
That shade and dim this lower life;
Walking with Thee—with Thee alone—
Above the storm, above the strife.

The child of God *must* walk alone,
If he would live and walk with Thee;
And only to such hearts are known
The joys of thy blest company.

Alone with Thee, O Master, where
The light of *earthly* glory dies;
Misunderstood by all, I dare
To do what *Thine* own heart will prize.

Such be my path through life down here—
One long, close, lonely walk with Thee;
Until, past every doubt and fear,
Thy face in light above I see.

A. S. O.

"GOD IS NOW HERE!" OR, THE INFIDEL AND HIS BOARD.

THE owner of that pretty little cottage was an *Atheist*. As regards this world he was very prosperous; a carpenter by trade, he had plenty of work, health, and strength, and all he wanted. For years he lived despising God. He had a loving, praying, pious wife, but she had a long, long time to wait before her prayers were answered, though at last they were answered, and in a wonderful way too. One other treasure the carpenter possessed—a dear little girl, whom he loved with as fond a love as father ever bestowed on a child; but, alas, such was his hatred of religion, that, notwithstanding the entreaties of his wife, he would not hear of her even going to school, lest she should learn to read

her Bible, and be taught about the *Christian's God*; so the little girl lived untaught save by her gentle mother, who ceased not to pray that her husband's heart might be softened to receive the truth.

At last God's time of converting grace came. The carpenter was taken ill, he became more and more so; his wife's fears were aroused. "Oh! if he should die," thought she, "what *will* become of his soul?" She prayed, and prayed, and when she saw the strong man becoming weak as a child, she determined to go to the minister, and entreat him to visit her poor husband. That minister had long striven in vain to speak words of truth to the atheist, but he had resisted his every approach with insult and scorn. Now this messenger of peace at once rose joyfully to go with the anxious wife; but no sooner did the sick man get a glimpse of him, than he assailed him with oaths and curses, and bade him begone and never darken his door again. The man of God, seeing it was useless to remain, mournfully left the wretched man, inwardly praying that he might yet turn and repent.

The terrified wife came in for no small share of abuse at daring to fetch the minister: meekly she bore it all, and continued lifting up her heart in prayer for her husband. Presently he exclaimed, "I'll never let that man into my room to talk to me of his God, in whom I don't believe. Bring me a board and a piece of chalk." The wife obeyed, and what were her feelings of horror when she saw his hot, fevered fingers slowly write in capital letters, "GOD IS NOWHERE." "Place this," said he, "at the bottom of my bed, that I may see it every time I open my eyes, and that all who enter may see my creed." The poor wife dared not expostulate and tremblingly did as he bid her; then she sat apart, still pleading forgiveness for her hardened husband. The fever increased until delirium came on, and the life of the atheist was in imminent danger, death seemed at the threshold.

Then shone forth the character of the minister; he came to the chamber of disease, his presence was unnoticed now, for reason was obscured. He at once decided to take the little girl to his own home that she might be out of the way of infection; he strengthened the sorrowing wife and prayed with her. The little girl was received as a sacred loan by the minister's wife, who determined to make the most of the short time she might be with her, and teach her lessons of truth. She found her an apt and willing learner; she took her to the Sunday School, where, for the first time, she heard the word of God read and explained to the assembled children. She was allowed to be present at family worship, and heard with delight her loved father prayed for that he might recover.

Ere long God, in His infinite mercy, arrested the hand of death; the fever abated, then was subdued; the poor man was pronounced out of danger. The wife's heart overflowed with gratitude, the minister praised God in the congregation. The first request the sick man made was that his treasured little girl might be brought to him, and the doctor promised that if all went on well in a little time he might see her. Days passed and the sick man gained strength, but he shewed no gratitude to God, and his eyes still fell on the words of that terrible board at the bottom of his bed, for his wife had not dared to run the risk of exciting him by removing it. At length permission was given for his little girl to see him *for only a few minutes*—those few minutes were pregnant with eternal import! She was placed on a pillow near her father, and that heart, which was at enmity with God, was softened with the tenderest emotions towards the child.

"Well, my pet," said the carpenter, "where have you been while father has been lying ill?"

"Oh!" said the little one, "I've been so happy; the minister's lady is so kind; I love her so: the minister took me away, and has been so good to me: and they have

taught me to read, and given me a book full of beautiful pictures; and I can read ever so many little words."

The father listened with delight to his sweet, artless prattler; then said, "You can't read much yet, I should think: could you read to me the words on that board at the bottom of my bed?"

"Oh, yes, father, let me try," said the little one; and she began slowly spelling and repeating each letter—G O D I S—she then stopped, got very red, looked again, then said, "Oh, father, I've got it—GOD IS NOW HERE," and added, "Yes, father, so He is, and He's been here all the time you've been so ill."

"You must go now, darling," said the father, in a low, choking voice. The door was closed, a burst of repentant tears followed; and sounds, blessed sounds, which rejoiced the angels in heaven, came from that sick man's room—sounds of prayer, sounds of deep contrition for sin. The requests of the loving, praying wife, long ungranted, but not forgotten, were now fulfilled: the atheist became a penitent. Satan was taken in his own snare; the *very same letters* he had tempted the sinner to write, were the *selfsame letters employed for that sinner's conversion!* He now called on God, the living, the prayer-hearing God, for mercy; he was awakened to a sense of his transgressions, he was broken-hearted before God, and he now earnestly desired to see the minister. That messenger of love and kindness at once went to him, shewed him the way of access to Jesus, and had the joy of beholding him rise from that bed of sickness a new man in Christ.

In Romans, Colossians, and Ephesians we get three stages of advance; in Romans, dead *with* Christ and alive through Him; in Colossians, dead with Him and risen with Him; in Ephesians, dead in trespasses and sins, quickened together, raised up together, made to sit together in Him in heavenly places.

CORRESPONDENCE.

90. "G. S.," Tasmania. We have read your kind letter, with considerable interest, and we desire to thank you, most heartily, for your encouraging and loving words. We cannot quite agree with your interpretation of the "foolish virgins" in Matthew xxv. We believe they represent merely nominal christian professors. They have the lamp of profession, and the wick of religious routine; but they lack the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. There would, in our judgment, be an insuperable difficulty in applying the parable to the Jews. We believe it refers to Christendom. There is a good deal of force and interest in all you say as to the "cry," &c., but we are most fully convinced that the foolish virgins apply to mere professors. Thanks for your loving enquiry as to our circulation. We are *greatly* encouraged.

91. "S. D.," Chichester. We should recommend you to procure a copy of "Lectures on the Gospel of Matthew," by W. Kelly, published by "Broom, Paternoster Row." They can be had also through our publisher, Mr. Morrish, or any bookseller. Accept our sincere thanks for your very encouraging letter. While it is our earnest desire to work quietly on, believing assuredly that our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord, and that "*the day*" will reveal the result of every man's labour; yet we esteem it a very great kindness, as it most surely is a comfort to us, for any one to let us know of blessing and profit received through our pages. Were we to notice, in particular, all the cheering communications which reach us, it might seem like puff and boast, which we regard with most thorough disgust. May the Lord greatly bless you, beloved friend!

92. "M. H.," Scarborough. We regard your note as being anything but presumptuous; but we must persist in saying we see no foundation in scripture for a person breaking bread alone. It is distinctly an act of fellowship to the integrity of which the presence of two is, in our opinion, absolutely essential.

93. "Ventnor." We cannot see exactly the ground of your difficulty. In the opening of Exodus xix. the Lord evidently refers to a covenant already existing, and that is the covenant with Abraham, the only one we read of until the covenant made at Horeb. It was the fact of the people's undertaking to "do" anything that marked the moral ground on which they stood, the true character of which was so fully brought out by the law. "The law

entered [or, came in by-the-by], that the offence might abound." God used the law, in His governmental dealings with Israel, in order to raise the question of righteousness; but it was never according to His loving heart to put His people at a distance from Him, or to set up barriers to keep them off. We must just add a word in grateful acknowledgment of the kindly spirit and tone of your letter. Would that all could state their difficulties and ask their questions in a like spirit!

94. "E. S. K.," North Brixton. It was perfectly consistent for the disciples, previous to the day of Pentecost, to pray for the Holy Spirit, inasmuch as He was not given till that memorable day, and could not be given until Jesus was glorified. (Comp. John vii. 39; xvi. 7; Acts xix. 1—6.) We believe the form of prayer given to the disciples was suited to the transition state in which they were until the coming of the Comforter. From that time it holds good that, "We know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." Where would be the force of this, if the Church of God were confined to one definite form of prayer? It is well for Christians to consider, most attentively, the vast difference between God's people—their standing—their calling—their hope, before and after the death and resurrection of Christ, and the consequent descent of the Holy Ghost. This is very little seen or thought of: and hence the low spiritual condition, the darkness and doubt, the legality and distance, the cloudiness and mistiness so painfully observable among many of God's beloved people. How rarely do you find souls enjoying accomplished redemption, and the indwelling of the Holy Ghost! There is, everywhere, a strong tendency to take merely Jewish ground. People are under law, as to the state of their conscience. But little is known of the conscious possession of eternal life, sonship, and the sealing of the Spirit. It is deemed presumption for any one to have the full assurance of salvation. And yet, by a strange inconsistency, persons who speak thus deem it possible for some who have made great attainments in holiness and the divine life, to have assurance. Now this is, in reality, presumption because it bases assurance upon something in *us*, even though that something be by the Holy Ghost; whereas scripture bases our assurance and peace, not on aught in us, but upon accomplished redemption by Christ. This makes a grand and all-important difference.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

"*Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and they will hear it.*" (Acts xxviii. 28.)

What glorious words for us, sinners of the Gentiles! What solemn words for the house of Israel! They form the close of Paul's address to his brethren, according to the flesh, whom he had invited to meet him in his lodging at Rome. It is now eighteen hundred years since these words were uttered by the blessed apostle—that true lover of Israel; but they have lost none of their freshness, none of their living depth, none of their heavenly power, by the lapse of ages. They fall upon our ears with the same force of application as if we had been standing outside the apostle's door at the moment in which he uttered them, "The salvation of God is sent to the Gentiles."

It may be well for the reader to glance at the circumstances under which those precious words were spoken. The apostle Paul, having arrived as a prisoner at Rome—the grand centre and seat of Gentile power—the fourth of Daniel's great empires—calls his much loved and longed for brethren together; and when they assembled at his lodging, according to appointment, "he expounded unto them, and testified of the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening. And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not. And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive; for the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and

hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."

Then follows the remarkable clause with which this paper opens—a clause pregnant with the most momentous results to us Gentiles; and these results are all the more precious to us when we are assured that they flow not from the final rejection, but only from the temporary setting aside of the nation of Israel. Such is the distinct teaching of the apostle, in Romans xi., "I say then, Have they [Israel] stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall *salvation is come unto the Gentiles*, for to provoke them to jealousy. Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness? For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: if by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. [How deeply touching!] For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead? .... For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits (the very thing which Christendom has become); that blindness *in part* is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.* And so ALL ISRAEL SHALL BE SAVED: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." Romans xi. 11—27.

* The reader will distinguish between "The fulness of the Gentiles," and "The times of the Gentiles." (Luke xxi. 24.) The former refers to the gathering out from among the Gentiles for blessing; the latter, on the contrary, refers to the closing up of their history in judgment—the history of those four great empires spoken of by Daniel the prophet. It is well to weigh this distinction.

Having said thus much to shew the true dispensational position of our subject, we shall proceed, in dependence upon divine guidance, to unfold and apply it, in an entirely evangelistic way, to the souls of our readers, In so doing, we shall notice three distinct questions arising out of our brief but comprehensive text, namely, first, What is sent? Secondly, Who sends it? Thirdly, To whom is it sent? And first, then,

WHAT IS SENT?

Salvation! Precious word! Well may we call upon the reader to consider it. Looked at in its full, broad, evangelical sense, as presented by the apostle, in the passage before us, it comprehends all the rich blessings secured to us, sinners of the Gentiles, in the gospel of the grace of God. It reaches from the very heart of God down to the lowest point in our condition; and it lifts us completely out of our guilt and ruin, and places us before God, in the full results of Christ's accomplished redemption. It secures to us, at the very outset, the full and final remission of all our sins; the perfect obliteration of all our guilt; entire deliverance from all wrath and judgment to come; and it introduces us into the unclouded favour of God. It secures to us, not only deliverance from the just consequences of our *sins*, but from the present dominion of *sin*, as a ruling principle. It secures to us "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." In short, "The salvation of God" includes, within its blessed compass, all we can possibly want for time and eternity; and not only so, but all that was in the heart of God to bestow.

A passage or two of scripture will serve to illustrate the force of the expression, "salvation of God." In Exodus xiv. we find Israel in great pressure. They were surrounded on all sides by difficulties, to them perfectly insuperable. The sea was before them; the mountains around them; Pharaoh's hosts behind them. They were "shut up," in every way. It was a hopeless case so far as they were con-

cerned. But this was just the fitting occasion in the which to enter into the full meaning of "The salvation of God." If there were a single ray—the faintest glimmer of human hope, that ray—that glimmer could only be, so far, a hindrance to the shining forth, in undimmed lustre, of God's salvation. But the case was desperate, and hence they were in a position to understand and appreciate those precious words of Moses, "Stand still, and *see* the salvation of the Lord."

Thus it is ever. "Man's extremity is God's opportunity." It is when all is lost that we can really understand the meaning of salvation. If we have the weight of a feather or the breadth of a hair to lean on or cling to, in the shape of creature confidence, human hope, or earthly expectation, we have only just so much in the way of hindrance to our seeing the clear light of God's salvation.

But let us take another case. Turn, for a moment, to 2 Chronicles xx. Here we see Jehoshaphat surrounded with overwhelming difficulties, in the presence of which he is constrained to own that he had *no might*. What was the word to him? Just the same as it had been to Israel, in Exodus xiv. "Stand still, and *see* the salvation of the Lord." It needed no might, no knowledge, to "stand still, and see." When a Saviour God is moving before us, our proper attitude is to stand still—our suited action, to gaze and worship. All we really want is to come to the end of self and its busy doings, in order that God may fill the vision of the soul, and the beams of His salvation gladden and light up the heart.

This is the deep and precious secret of peace and bles ing, at all times, and in all conditions. Would we l truly happy in God's salvation? Then let us cease from our own restless efforts and rest in what He has done for us. It is when we are really brought to cry out, from the very depths of the soul, "no might," that the divine response falls with clearness and power on the ear, "stand still, and see the salvation of God."

Take one more case. Look at Jonah. See him with the weeds wrapped about his head—see him in the very belly of hell: all hope gone; no human hand to reach him; and all this, be it remembered, the fruit of his disobedience. Yet what does he say? What are the accents that reach us from those profound and awful depths? "Salvation is of the Lord!" Precious words! It matters not what the difficulties may be, or how far gone we may be in our ruin and wretchedness, it still holds good that "salvation is of the Lord." Jonah's history furnishes a vivid illustration of this. He brought all the trouble and sorrow on himself. If he had not been wilful, if he had yielded himself to the will of his Lord, if he had run in the way of His commandments, he never would have found himself in the whale's belly. But alas! as we so often do, he chose his own way, and he found himself in consequence plunged in the very depths of distress. Still God will be God, spite of all our wilfulness and folly; and the very moment Jonah gave utterance to that brief sentence, "Salvation is of the Lord," we are told that "The Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land."

The foregoing examples, drawn from the pages of Old Testament scripture, will suffice to illustrate to the reader, in some degree, the true force of the word "salvation." It is God's intervention, in grace and mercy, in man's behalf; it is deliverance wrought by God's own hand when all hope is gone. It is a word of marvellous fulness and completeness. It is, as we know, used in various ways, in scripture. For instance, the apostle exhorts the Philippians to "Work out their own salvation." Here the word is used in an inferior sense, and applies to the difficulties and dangers which surrounded those beloved saints. It cannot be taken in its high and broad sense, as applying to the eternal salvation of their souls, inasmuch as they were saved already, But there was much trial and pressure—they were sur-

rounded by snares and temptations, and passing through a scene in which all was hostile; and, while the apostle was with them, they would naturally lean on him—on his wisdom and spiritual energy; but now, in his absence, he exhorts them to work out their own deliverance, assuring them, however, that it was God who worked in them both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

We have noticed the passage in Philippians ii. 12, because many find difficulty in it; but our present theme is salvation in the fullest, highest, and broadest sense in which it is presented in the word of God—salvation as including everything which a lost sinner can need—salvation stretching like a golden chain, from everlasting to everlasting, and every link in that chain is Christ—salvation overlapping the whole of our history, from first to last, meeting every exigency of our earthly path and conducting us safe to glory. In one word, it is "the salvation of God." This is enough. It is not merely a salvation in every way suited to us, but a salvation in every way worthy of God. It is not only that we are perfectly saved, but God is perfectly glorified.

And be it further noted, that when once the soul has laid hold of this salvation, it can never lose it—no, never. All the rage of hell, all the powers of earth, all the crafty malice of Satan, all the hostile influences that could be brought to bear, could not rob the saved soul of God's salvation. Oh! no, reader, let no one persuade you to think that a divinely saved soul can ever be lost. This would be a gross dishonour to God. It would tarnish His glory if one whom he has saved could ever perish. Could we admit, for a moment, the horrible thought, that God would, or could, send a defective salvation to the Gentiles? Impossible! Grant me but this, that God has sent me salvation, and I argue, with holy boldness, that it must be a perfect and an everlasting salvation.

(To be concluded in our next, if the Lord will.)

A FIFTH LETTER ON EVANGELIZATION.

October, 1869.

DEAREST A——,

It seems as though I must, once more, take up my pen to address you on certain matters, connected with the work of evangelization, which have forced themselves upon my attention for some time past. There are three distinct branches of the work which I long to see occupying a far more definite and prominent place amongst us; and these are the Tract depôt; the Gospel preaching; and the Sunday School.

It strikes me that the Lord is awakening attention to the importance of the Tract depôt as a valuable agency in the great work of evangelization; but I question if we, on this side of the Atlantic, are as thoroughly in earnest on the subject as our friends in America and Australia. How is this? Have books and tracts lost their interest and value in our eyes? Have they become a mere drug amongst us? Or does the fault lie in the mode of conducting our Tract depôts? To my mind there seems to be something lacking in reference to this matter and it is high time we should enquire what that something is. I would fain see a well-conducted depôt in every important town in the three kingdoms; and by a well conducted depôt I mean one taken up and carried on as a direct service to the Lord; in true love for souls; deep interest in the spread of the truth; and, at the same time, in a sound business way. I have known several depôts fall to the ground through lack of business habits on the part of the conductors. They seemed very earnest, sincere persons, but quite unfit to conduct a business. In short, they were persons in whose hands any business would have fallen through. For example, I have visited some places in which the Tract depôt was managed or rather mismanaged by invalids. In one

place, I found the service in the hands of a poor old bed-ridden woman. She was a most dear person, and it was quite delightful to spend an hour by her bed-side; but how could she possibly manage a depôt? I believe she had been confined to her bed for three years. One might pass her door for years and never know that there was such a thing as a tract or a book to be had. There was no shop, no sort of advertisement, no exposure of the tracts in the window.

Nor is this a solitary instance; were it so, I should pass it over in silence. In many places there is the most deplorable failure as to the valuable and interesting work of conducting the depôt. You may go to a large town and enquire for the place where tracts are to be had, and you will be directed to some obscure street, and a still more obscure room, where, in the midst of dust and confusion, a few ill-assorted and ill-kept tracts may be seen huddled together in a manner which I must call utterly disgraceful.

Now, I should like to know who can be expected to purchase tracts under such circumstances? Most assuredly the generality of people will not do so. Some few may be found with sufficient interest and energy to surmount all sorts of difficulties, and ferret out the tracts wherever they may be found. But then the people whom we really want to reach are just those who have not this interest and energy. And how can we best reach them? I believe by having the books and tracts exposed for sale in a shop window so that people may see them as they pass, and step in and purchase what they want. Many a soul has been laid hold of in this way. Many, I doubt not, have been saved and blessed by means of tracts seen, for the first time, in a shop window or arranged on a counter. Would such persons have sought out the obscure room above referred to? Would they have knocked at the door of that poor old bed-ridden woman to ask for tracts? The idea is perfectly absurd.

Hence, therefore, it is plain, to every well-adjusted mind,

that there is a real want of a tract shop, in every large town, conducted by some one of intelligence and sound business habits, who would be able to speak to persons about the tracts and to recommend such as might prove helpful to anxious enquirers after truth. In this way, I feel persuaded, much good might be done. The Christians in the town would know where to go for tracts, not only for their own personal reading, but also for general distribution. Surely if a thing is worth doing at all it is worth doing well; and if the Tract depôt be not worth attending to, we know not what is.

But it will, perhaps, be said in reply, "The sale of tracts would not yield a living to any one. The demand is so small in country towns that it would never be worth any one's while to embark in the business, unless indeed in London, Glasgow, Manchester, or some very large city or town. And even in those towns, unless a man can combine the printing and publishing business with the sale of books and tracts, it would never pay."

Now, I fully admit that a man must live and he must support his family. But, at the same time, the Tract depôt must be taken up in direct service to Christ; and I feel assured that where it is so taken up, and so carried on in energy, zeal, and integrity, God will supply, in His own liberal way, all His servant's need. But, on the other hand, where the work of selling and circulating tracts is less than secondary—where you find the tracts thrust into a corner, shut up in a drawer, or hidden under the counter—where other branches of trade are sedulously cultivated, but the tracts barely tolerated, need we wonder if the sale of tracts fails to remunerate? God says, "Them that honour me I will honour." But is it honouring Him when His business is flung into the shade, and our own business placed in the foreground? Clearly not. And does not this objection on the score of remuneration savour of those to whom

Malachi addresses his burning words, who would "not open a door or kindle a fire for nought?" Is there no one who will take up this valuable work for Christ's sake and not for the sake of remuneration? Is there no one who will enter upon it in simple faith, looking to the living God?

Here lies the root of the matter, dearest A—. We want men for this branch of the work, as for every other branch, who, like Gideon's three hundred, are prepared to trust God and to deny themselves. It seems to me that a grand point would be gained if the business of the Tract depôt were placed on its proper footing, and viewed as an integral part of the evangelistic work, to be taken up on the principle of individual responsibility, and carried on in the energy of personal faith in the living God. I question if this is seen with sufficient clearness. Every branch of gospel work—the Depôt, the Preaching, the Sunday School, must be carried on in this way. It is all well and most valuable to have fellowship—full cordial fellowship, in all our service; but if we wait for fellowship and co-operation in the starting of work which comes within the range of personal responsibility, we shall find ourselves very much behind.

I shall have occasion to refer, more particularly, to this point, when I come to treat of the Preaching and the Sunday School. All I want now, is to establish the fact that the Tract depôt is a branch, and a most important and efficient branch, of evangelistic work. If this be thoroughly grasped by our friends, a great point is gained. I must confess to you, dearest A—, that my moral sense has often been grievously offended by the cold commercial style in which the publishing and sale of books and tracts are spoken of—a style quite befitting the drapery or hosiery line; but most offensive when adopted in reference to the precious work of God. I admit in the fullest way—nay, I actually contend for it—that the proper management of the depôt demands good sound business habits, and upright business principles. But, at the same time, I am persuaded

that the tract shop will never occupy its true ground—never realize the true idea, never reach the desired end—until it is firmly fixed on its holy basis and viewed as an integral part of that most glorious work to which we are called—even the work of active, earnest, persevering evangelization. And this work must be taken up wholly on the ground of personal responsibility to Christ and in the energy of personal faith in the living God. It will not do for an assembly of Christians, or some wealthy individual, to take up an inefficient *protegé*, and commit to such an one the management of the affair in order to afford a means of living. It is most blessed for all to have fellowship in the work; but I am thoroughly convinced that the work must be taken up in simple faith. It must be viewed as direct service to Christ, to be carried on in love for souls, and in real interest in the spread of truth; and where such is the case, we may rest assured, God will take care of His dear servants.

I hope to address you again on the other two branches of my theme.

Meanwhile, allow me to subscribe myself, dearest A—,

Your deeply affectionate yokefellow,

* * *

GLORIES.

THERE will be a scene of glories when the kingdom comes. We commonly speak of "glory" as if it stood in that connection only. But this is wrong. Glory then will be displayed, it is true; glory will then be in the circumstances of the scene. But a much more wonderful form of glory is known already—and that is, in the gospel. There God Himself is displayed; a more wondrous object than all circumstances. The glory of the gospel is *moral*, I grant, no material or circumstantial. But it is glory of the profoundest character. There, again I say, God Himself is displayed.

The just God and yet the Saviour is seen there. Righteousness and peace shine there in each other's company—a result which none but God Himself, and in the way of the cross, could ever have reached.

The gospel calls on sinners to breathe the atmosphere, as I may say, of salvation, to have communion with God in love, and to maintain it in liberty and assurance—and there is a glory in such thoughts and truths as these which indeed excelleth.

Satan interfered or meddled with the work of God, and ruined it in its creature-condition. God at once interfered or meddled with Satan's work, and eternally overthrew it, bringing meat out of the eater, and sweetness out of the strong.

The three earliest receivers of God's gospel, Adam, Eve, and Abel, strikingly illustrate souls that apprehended the glory of the gospel in different features of it.

Adam was blessedly, wondrously emboldened by it, so that at the bidding of it, he came forth at once from his guilty covert and entered the presence of God again, naked as he was. And his boldness was warranted, for he was welcomed there. Eve exulted in it. She sang over it. "I have gotten a man from the Lord," said she—in the joy of the promise that had been made her touching her seed.

Abel offered the "fat" with the victim. He entered with happiest, brightest intelligence into the promise, and saw that the Giver of it would find His own blessed delight in it—that the gospel, while it saved the sinner, was the joy as well as the glory of God. The fat on the altar expressed this.

And such apprehensions of Christ as these—the faith that gives boldness—the faith that inspires with joy—the faith that penetrates the cross—is full of power in the soul.

SHORT PAPERS ON CHURCH HISTORY;

&c., &c., &c.

We now come to what we may call the second group of four apostles; and, just as Peter heads the first group, the second is headed by the apostle

Philip. In the first three gospels he is placed in this order. He is mentioned as being of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. (John i. 44.) It is more than probable that he was among the Galileans of that district who flocked to hear the preaching of John the Baptist. Though no part of Palestine was spoken of in such terms of reproach as Galilee, it was from these despised, but simple, earnest, and devoted Galileans that our Lord chose His apostles. "Search, and look," said the Pharisees, "for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet." But sweeping statements, generally speaking, are untrue. "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" is a sample of their character.

Nothing is said in the gospel history of Philip's parents or occupation. Most likely he was a fisherman, the general trade of that place. From the similarity of language used by Philip and Andrew, and their being repeatedly mentioned together, we may conclude that our apostle, and the sons of Jonas and Zebedee, were intimate friends, and that they were all looking and waiting for the expected Messiah. But in the whole circle of our Lord's disciples, Philip has the honour of being first called. The *first three* had come to Christ, and conversed with him before Philip, but afterwards they returned to their occupation, and were not called to follow the Lord for about a year after. But Philip was called at once. "The day following," we read, "Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me." These words, so full of meaning and rich blessing to the soul, "Follow me," we believe were

first said to Philip. When the twelve were specially set apart for their office, he was numbered among them.

Immediately after his call, he finds Nathanael and leads him to Jesus. It is evident, from the glad surprise which breathes in his information, that they had spoken together of these things before. His heart was now well assured of their truth; hence the joy expressed in these words, "We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." There is an evident earnest-heartedness about Philip, though little is said of him in the gospels. Our last interview with him, like the first, is deeply interesting. Having heard the Lord repeatedly refer to His Father in John xii., xiii., xiv., he manifested a strong desire to know more of the Father. The pathetic words of our Lord about His Father appear to have made a deep impression on his heart; and little wonder. "Father, save me from this hour"—"Father, glorify thy name"—"In my Father's house are many mansions:" are sayings which, we doubt not, sank deep in all the disciples' hearts. But there is a beautiful simplicity about Philip, though lacking in intelligence. "Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us." There is evident reproof, if not reproach, in the Lord's reply to Philip. "Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very works' sake." There had been the revelation of the Father in His own Person, and he ought to have known Him. He had now been a long time with His disciples, and they ought to have seen that He was in the Father, and the Father in Him, and thus have known where He was going, for He was going to the Father. They had both the "*words*" and the "*works*" of the Son, to convince

them that the Father dwelt in Him. They had heard His words, they had seen His works, they had witnessed His character, and these things were fitted and intended to bring the Father before them. His own Person was the answer to every question. "I am the way, the truth, and the life." He was the way—the only way to the Father. He was the truth—the truth as to every one and every thing as they are, is only known by Him. He is the life—"that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us." But it is only by the teaching and power of the Spirit that He who is "the way, the truth, and the life," is known and enjoyed. And there must be subjection of heart to Christ, if we would know the teaching of the Spirit.

After this deeply interesting and instructive conversation with the Lord, all is uncertain as to Philip's history—his name disappears from the gospel narrative. He has his own place in the catalogue, Acts i. 13. Tradition has so frequently confounded Philip the evangelist with Philip the apostle, that all is uncertain. No doubt his remaining years were spent in devoted service to his Lord and Saviour, but where, it is difficult to say. Some think that Upper Asia was the scene of his early labours, and that in the latter period of his life he came to Hierapolis in Phrygia, where he suffered a cruel martyrdom.

BARTHOLOMEW. It has been very generally believed both by ancients and moderns, that the history of Bartholomew lies concealed under another name. That he was one of the twelve apostles, is perfectly clear from the gospel narrative, though nothing more is said of him than the bare mention of his name. In the first three gospels, Philip and Bartholomew are mentioned together; in John's gospel, it is Philip and Nathanael. This circumstance has given rise to a very common conjecture, that these are but different names for the same person. Nothing was more common

han this among the Jews. For example, Simon Peter is called "Bar-jona," which simply means—the son of Jona. "Bar-timeus" again, means the son of Timeus; and "Bartholomew" is a name of the same class. These are merely *relative*, not *proper* names. From this custom being so general among the Jews, it is often extremely difficult to *identify* persons in the gospel history.

Assuming, then, that the Nathanael of John is the Bartholomew of the synoptical gospels, we proceed with what we know of his history. Like the rest of the apostles, he was a Galilean—he was "of Cana in Galilee." We have seen in a former paper, that he was first conducted by Philip to Christ. On his approach, he was greeted by the Lord, with the most honourable distinction—"Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile." He was, no doubt, a man of true simplicity and integrity of character; and one that "waited for redemption in Israel." Surprised at our Lord's most gracious salutation, and wondering how He could know him at first sight, "Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee." Solemn, yet blessed thought! he stood before one—a man—in this world, who knew the secrets of his heart and ways. Nathanael was now fully convinced of the absolute deity of the Messiah, and owns Him in His higher glories as "the Son of God" as well as "the king of Israel."

The character of Nathanael and his call are considered by many as typical of the remnant of Israel, without guile, in the latter day. The allusion to the fig tree—the well-known symbol of Israel—confirms this view of the passage; and so does his beautiful testimony. "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the king of Israel." The spared remnant, seen and known by the Lord, will thus confess their faith in Him, as the prophets most fully shew. And all those who thus own the Messiah, shall see His universal

glory as the Son of man, according to Psalm viii. That coming day of wide spread glory is anticipated by our Lord in His concluding remarks to Nathanael: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." Then will the heavens and the earth be joined together, as if by Jacob's ladder. But we must now return to the direct history of our apostle.

The most distinct and conclusive passage as to his apostleship is John xxi. There we find him in company with the other apostles, to whom our Lord appeared at the sea of Tiberias after His resurrection. "There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and *Nathanael of Cana in Galilee*, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples," who probably were Andrew and Philip.

There is a generally received tradition, that Bartholomew travelled as far as India, preaching the gospel. Probably to that part of India which lies nearest to Asia. After travelling in different places, seeking to spread Christianity, he at last reached Albanople, in Armenia the Great, a place overgrown with idolatry. There he was arrested in the midst of his labours by the governor of the place, and condemned to be crucified. The date is not certainly known.

MATTHEW—called also Levi, the son of Alpheus; but not the same person, we believe, as Alphæus the father of James. (Matt. x. 3; Mark ii. 14; Luke v. 27—29.) Though a Roman officer, he was "an Hebrew of the Hebrews," and probably a Galilean, but of what city or tribe we are not informed. Before his call to follow the Messiah, he was a publican, or tax gatherer, under the Romans. He seems to have been stationed at Capernaum, a maritime town on the Sea of Galilee. He was what we should call a custom-house officer. It was in this capacity that Jesus found him. When He passed by, He saw him "sitting at

the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him." But before proceeding with the history of Matthew, we would say a few words on the character of his occupation, as it is so frequently mentioned in the New Testament, and is really a symbolic term.

PUBLICANS, properly so called, were persons who farmed the Roman taxes or revenue. They were, usually, persons of wealth and credit. It was considered among the Romans an honourable position, and generally conferred on Roman knights. Sabinus, it is said, father of the Emperor Vespasian, was the publican of the Asiatic provinces. They employed under them inferior officers, and these, generally, were natives of the provinces where the taxes were collected; to this class Matthew no doubt belonged.

These petty officers were everywhere notorious for their fraudulent exactions; but to the Jews they were especially odious. They looked upon themselves as a freeborn people, and that they had this privilege direct from God Himself. "We be Abraham's seed," was their boast, "and were never in bondage to any man." Consequently, the Roman tax gatherers were the visible proofs of their slavery, and of the degraded state of their nation. This was the chain that galled them, and betrayed them into many acts of rebellion against the Romans. Hence it was that publicans were abhorred by the Jews. They looked upon them as traitors and apostates, and as the ready tools of the oppressor. Besides, they were most arbitrary and unjust in their taxations; and having the law on their side, they could enforce payment. It was in their power to examine each case of goods exported or imported, and to assess the alleged value in the most vexatious way. We may gather, from what John said to them, that they overcharged whenever they had an opportunity. "And he said unto them, Exact no more than is appointed you." Luke iii. 13. See also the case of Zaccheus. Luke xix. 9.

Surely these things were more than enough to bring the whole class into the greatest detestation everywhere. But we will confine ourselves to what we learn of them in the New Testament. The Spirit of truth never exaggerates. Then we find them classed with *sinners* (Matt. ix. 11; xi. 19); with *harlots* (Matt. xxi. 31, 32); with *heathen.* (Matt. xviii. 17.) As a class, they were excommunicated, not only from the privileges of the sanctuary, but from the privileges of civil society. And yet, notwithstanding all these disadvantages, their ranks furnished some of the earliest disciples both of John and of our Lord. They had less hypocrisy than those who were esteemed better, they had no conventional morality; and they had no false religion to unlearn. These things may be fairly argued from the parable of the Pharisee and publican. (Luke xviii.) Conventional goodness is a mighty hindrance to the soul's salvation. It is difficult for such to take the place of a lost, ruined sinner, that grace may have a free course and do her blessed, saving, gracious work. He who would be justified of God, must take the publican's place, and offer up the publican's prayer, "God be merciful to me a sinner." We now return to the history of our apostle.

With great readiness Matthew obeyed the call of Jesus. His lucrative situation was at once given up; and his conversion, so thorough and manifest, was accompanied with much blessing to others. There was a great awakening and interest amongst his own class. "And Levi made a great feast in his own house; and there was a great company of publicans and others that sat down with them." A feast is the symbol of joy and rejoicing—the immediate effect of a hearty surrender to Christ. It is worthy of note that in his own gospel he refers to what he was, but neither of the other evangelists speaks of "Matthew the publican." Along with the others he was chosen one of the twelve. From that time he continued with the Lord, like the rest of the apostles. Blessed privilege!—"a familiar attendant

on His person, a spectator of His public and private life, a hearer of His sayings and discourses, a beholder of His miracles, a witness of His resurrection and ascension to glory." Matthew was with the other apostles on the day of Pentecost, and received the gift of the Holy Ghost. How long he continued in Judea after that event, we are not informed. His gospel is supposed to be the first that was written, and has a special reference to Israel.

Ethiopia is generally assigned as the scene of his apostolic labours. There, some say, by preaching and miracles, he mightily triumphed over error and idolatry, was the means of the conversion of many, appointed spiritual guides and pastors to confirm and build them up, and to bring over others to the faith; and there finished his course. But the sources of information on these points cannot be trusted.

SALVATION.

MY *soul, what a precious salvation,*	1 Pet. i. 10.
Thy Saviour has purchased for thee!	Heb. ix. 12.
O yield Him thy heart's adoration,	Ps. xlv. 11.
For none is so worthy as He.	Rev. v. 1—14.
He sought thee, when thou wast pursuing	Luke xix. 10.
The road that leads downward to hell;	Matt. vii. 13.
Arrested thee, saved thee from ruin,	Titus iii. 5.
That thou in His glory mightst dwell.	Col. iii. 4.
O! tell through the breadth of creation,	Mark xvi. 15.
That Jesus the Saviour has come,	1 Tim. i. 15.
To secure an eternal salvation,	Heb. v. 9.
A rest, and a heavenly home.	2 Cor. v. 1.
Tell him that is aged and wrinkled,	Job xxxii. 9.
Whose locks have grown hoary in sin,	Isa. lxv. 20.
There's enough in the blood that was sprinkled,	Heb. xii. 24.
To make FULL ATONEMENT for him.	1 John i. 7.

Tell him that's grown hard in rebellion, Prov. xxi. 29.
That Jesus entreats him to come; 2 Cor. v. 20.
Tell also the thoughtless and gay one, Ps. l. 22.
Tell all, that for all there is room. Luke xiv. 22.
Yea, tell them, without an exception, Rev. xxii. 17.
"Whoever believeth shall live." John iii. 16.
Though guilt may have stained every action, Isa. i. 18.
"The blood of the Lamb" cries "forgive." Eph. i. 7.

It speaks to the conscience that's troubled, Heb. ix. 13.
And tells of forgiveness of sin, Acts xiii. 38.
Yea, tells of a pardon that's doubled, Isa. xl. 2.
Of cleansing without and within. Heb. x. 22.
It tells, (my soul, hear it with wonder,) Isa. lii. 14.
That He who could punish for sin, Isa. xxvi. 21.
That He who could crush with His thunder, 2 Thess. i. 7.
Laid down His own life to redeem. 1 John iii. 16.

It tells that God's wrath and just vengeance, Eph. v. 6.
(Man's only desert,) fell on Him, Isa. liii. 5, 6.
It tells of the sinner made righteous, Rom. v. 19.
That for him was the JUST ONE made sin. 2 Cor. v. 21.
It speaks to the sinner forgiven, Luke xxii. 20.
And quells all his deadliest foes, Rev. xii. 11.
'Tis seen by his Father in heaven, Ex. xii. 13.
And mercy unceasingly flows. Ps. cxxxvi. 10.

Receive this free mercy, receive it, Acts x. 43.
No money, no price He demands; Isa. lv. 1.
The God of all grace loves to give it, Micah vii. 18.
Accept then the gift at His hands: Rom. vi. 2.
And taste of that precious salvation Ps. xxxiv. 8.
Which Jesus has bought with His blood, Rev. i. 5, 6.
Yield Him thy full heart's adoration, Luke xxiv. 52.
Who only is SAVIOUR and GOD. Jude 24, 25.

CORRESPONDENCE.

95. "H.," Rotherham. We have, in some former number, replied to your question. We believe that Matt. xxviii. 19 furnishes the proper formula for christian baptism. We are not aware of any subsequent revelation on the subject. "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Here we have the full revelation of the Godhead—the true foundation of christian doctrine. We see no reason for departing from the form of words prescribed by our Lord Jesus Christ. Is not His commandment more binding upon us than the example of any or all of His servants?

96. "J. D.," Newcastle-on-Tyne. The "Synopsis of the Books of the Bible" would help you. Also "Lectures Introductory to the Gospels," and on "the Epistles of Paul." To be had of our Publisher or through any bookseller.

97. "G. S. H." John x. 17, 18 contains a direct reply to your question.

98. "S. A.," Crewe. We cannot agree with your friend in his thoughts as to the breaking of bread. The word used in every instance, to express the act of "breaking" is κλαω, which, if we are to be guided by Liddell and Scott, never means "to pierce." In short, we can see no sort of sense or meaning in the notion to which you refer. It seems to us utterly baseless.

99. "R. O.," Bengal. We take it that "the doctrine" mentioned in Romans xvi. 17 is contained in the previous part of the epistle.

100. "J. C.," Near Stonehouse. It is often very needful in giving out hymns at gospel preachings, to offer a word of caution to those present in order to exercise their consciences as to what they sing. But at a meeting of Christians, we should deem it out of place to occupy time in expounding hymns. We must, however, beware of laying down iron rules. Let us cultivate simplicity and largeness of heart.

101. "J. C. M.," Liverpool. Ephesians ii. 22 contemplates those who were really builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. All true believers are living members of the body of Christ—living stones in the temple of God. Mere professors are neither the one nor the other. We must not confound the "Body" of chap. i. with the "House" of chap. ii.

102. "H. S. B.," London. Thanks for the lines. As to your first question, it might be well to ask the persons who use the language to which you refer what they mean by it. It certainly is possible to be occupied with mere doctrine apart from Christ; and this, perhaps, may be what is meant. But we greatly fear that spirit of fault-finding, which leads people to pick holes in every thing and every one except themselves. If we prayed more and talked less, we might be the means of doing some little good in our day and generation. We generally find that the fault-finding, hair-splitting generation are not the most blameless in their personal ways. The loudest talkers are generally the lowest walkers. Galatians vi. 7 may contain an answer to your second question. It is a solemn enactment of God's moral government. But grace can restore the soul, and lift us into higher communion than ever, as in Peter's case. We must distinguish between grace and government.

103. "A Babe," London. Luke xix. 17, 19 refers to those who, during Christ's absence, have served Him according to their ability. Matthew xxv. 34 refers to those nations who shall receive the messengers sent to them just before the opening of the millennial kingdom. These are "the sheep." On the other hand, "the goats" represent those nations who shall reject the messengers. "These my brethren" are the messengers who shall, as we believe, be from among the Jewish people. The Church is not in this scripture, though we know from other passages, that she will be associated with the Lord Jesus in all His glory and in all His doings. We do not at all view Matthew xxv. 31—46 as a general judgment. It is the judgment of the living "nations," before the millennium, as Revelation xx. 11—15 gives the judgment of the wicked dead, at the close of the millennium. The Church is not in either scene for judgment, for the simplest and most blessed of all reasons, her judgment is past and gone. Matthew xvi. 28 refers to the transfiguration. The "some standing here" were Peter, James, and John. The saints slain during the tribulation shall have part in the first resurrection. Excuse our hasty reply to questions so interesting—questions, by the way, which we should hardly have looked for from one signing himself "A Babe." The Lord make us all more truly babe-like!

104. "G.," London. Your case is a very serious one; but not beyond the reach of God's restoring grace. You will need to judge yourself thoroughly before God. We

fear you have never had a right sense of the evil of your nature. Still, you have to do with infinite and everlasting grace—with mercy which stretches from everlasting to everlasting—with blood that cleanseth from *all* sin—and with a High Priest who is able to save to the utmost. May God, in His rich mercy, restore your soul and keep you from falling again!

105. "W. D. C." You must, at all cost, seek to obey your Lord, and keep a conscience void of offence. Look to Him for strength to do His holy will. He will make your way plain, if your eye is single. Beware of tampering with conscience!

106. "A Weak Believer," London. Philippians ii. 12 does not refer to eternal salvation; that, blessed be God, is infallibly settled and secured. But then there were difficulties, dangers, snares, and temptations surrounding the Philippian saints; and, when the apostle was with them, they naturally looked to him, and depended upon his wisdom, experience, and spiritual power. He therefore writes to them, exhorting them, in his absence, to work out their own salvation or deliverance, in the confidence that it was God who worked in them for the accomplishment of that end.

107. "F. B.," Leeds. We trust you will kindly excuse our not answering your question. It is our fixed purpose to avoid all questions involving strictly local and personal matters. They do not suit the pages of a Magazine designed for general edification. Our friends will greatly oblige us by refraining from sending us any such questions.

108. "S. N. R.," Waterloo. You surely must have made a mistake, dear friend, in requesting an answer in our October number to a communication bearing date the 27th of September. The fact is, your letter barely reached us in time to be noticed in our issue for November. We feel assured that there are roots in your heart which God is seeking to reach by the severe discipline through which you are passing. Wait on Him. Seek to go through the trial with Him, and you will most surely reap a rich harvest of blessing. Look at Hebrews xii. 1—11. Here you find three ways of meeting discipline. You may either despise it; or faint under it; or be exercised by it. It is the last that yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness. You have our hearty sympathy and prayers, beloved friend. May God sustain and comfort you!

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

(Part ii.)

HAVING, in our leading article for last month, dwelt a little on the meaning, force, and value of the word "salvation," we shall now proceed to the question which forms the second part of our subject, namely,

WHO SENDS IT?

The answer to this question presents God in that character which, above all others, suits a lost sinner, and that is as a Saviour-God. Moreover, it assumes that man has been proved a total ruin—a hopeless wreck; that he has been weighed in the balance and found wanting; and that God is no longer looking to man to produce aught in the shape of righteousness—no longer proving and testing him in order to see if anything good could be got from him. In a word, the very fact of God's sending salvation to men proves, beyond all question, that men are in an utterly undone condition. If man be not *lost*, he does not need *salvation*. He might need *help;* but this latter is not what is sent, nor is it what we want. It is quite a mistake to say, as people sometimes do, "With the help of God, I hope to be saved, and get to heaven." If God be only a helper in the work of salvation, then it follows that man can co-operate with God in that great work, which were not only a fatal error, but a blasphemous presumption. What! God and the sinner on the same platform, both working together to the same grand end—man's salvation? Far away be the monstrous thought! No, no; God is alone in the work. Man is the material to be wrought upon—man in the condition of a lost one—needing not merely help, as though he could do a little; but needing full salvation, as one who can do absolutely nothing.

Is this weighty point fully seen? Does the reader see it? Does he see it in its application to himself? The volume of God teems with evidence in reference to it.

Every age of the world's history, every stage of man's history, from Paradise to Calvary, every dispensation of God, every economy under which He has ever dealt with man—all goes to prove, with overwhelming power of evidence, that if God was to do anything at all for the sinner, He must *save*, and not merely help him. Help might do for those who are weak and defective, or astray; nothing but salvation could avail for those who are hopelessly lost.

Blessed for ever be the God of all grace, this is exactly what He has sent. "The salvation of God is sent to the Gentiles." What divine power, what infinite fulness, what exhaustless depths are in these few words! They present a margin sufficiently broad for the insertion of all that God was pleased to do for us poor lost sinners. That blessed word salvation embraces in its mighty compass, not only all that we are saved *from*, but all that we are saved *to*, and what we are saved *by*. For, let it never be forgotten, that the glory of God is bound up in the salvation which He sends to us. This could not possibly be if man had to contribute the weight of a feather, or co-operate to the extent of the movement of an eye-lash, in the matter of salvation.

This is a point of immense interest and value, and one eminently calculated to strengthen the foundations of the Christian's faith, and to lift him beyond the reach of every doubt and every fear. God's glory is at stake in the salvation which He has wrought out for us and sent to us. What strength is here! What comfort and consolation! What peace and liberty! What courage and confidence! Nothing can exceed it. If a single flaw could be detected in the salvation of God—a single thing defective—a single point unprovided for—the slightest possibility of failure, from first to last—from the moment when the soul first tastes the sweetness of divine grace, until it bathes itself in the very fulness of divine glory—if it were possible that a saved soul could be lost—if a

single want of that saved soul were not perfectly provided for, whether in the way of "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, or redemption"—if, in short, there were a single missing link in the golden chain of salvation, then verily would the lustre of the divine glory be tarnished, and the enemy of God might triumph.

But no, reader, it cannot possibly be. "Salvation is of the Lord;" and this holds good whether it be a question of deliverance from the smallest difficulty lying in our daily path, or of the full, final, and everlasting salvation of our souls, actualized in the very presence of God and of the Lamb. It is all of God, from beginning to end. It wears the stamp of His omnipotent hand upon it, in its every stage. It flows like a shining river from His loving heart; and His glory is involved in the integrity of its every aspect and its every branch. It comes to us as free as the very air we breathe; and, when we get it—or rather when it lays hold of us—it is as permanent as the throne of God Himself. It is the fruit of the will of God, as accomplished in the perfect work of Christ, and attested by the record of the Holy Ghost in the scriptures of truth. See Hebrews x.

Such is the salvation which God sends to the Gentiles. And may we not triumphantly inquire, "What else could it be as coming from the hand and the heart of such a God?" Surely nothing else, nothing less, nothing different. God must be God in all His actings and in all His ways. His glory shines in everything to which He puts His hand. If He saves, He saves like Himself. Can any one, with a single ray of the true knowledge of God, imagine that He could send us a salvation with a flaw of any sort whatsoever? Or can we suppose that when God speaks of sending us salvation He would think of fencing that salvation round about with certain legal conditions? Can we suppose that when God set about saving lost sinners through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, He would do so

with a "Yea" in one place, and a "Nay" in another? Impossible—utterly impossible. We can understand God putting men under conditions—giving them laws and statutes—putting them to the test, and raising the question of righteousness, and causing the offence to abound. He did all this at Mount Sinai. But this was not "sending salvation." Giving a law, by the disposition of angels, in order to put man to the test, is one thing; and sending a full and free salvation to lost sinners, on the ground of the death and resurrection of Christ, is another thing. Salvation is absolute, eternal, divine. It is as perfect as the One who sends it, and man has nothing to do but to receive it, and walk in the light and power of it all his days upon earth, and then go home to bask in the beams of it in that bright and blessed world above.

And, let it never be forgotten, that in this salvation whereof we speak, there is most blessedly included and secured holiness of life—yes, beloved reader, remember this. True holiness is wrapped up in the comprehensive folds of that salvation which our gracious God has sent to the Gentiles. It includes victory over lusts, tempers, habits, influences, circumstances—victory over self and its surroundings—victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil. True it is—alas! how true, we fail to make good, in our souls' experience, from day to day, what God's salvation secures to us. We fail to plant the foot of faith upon the full extent of that fair inheritance which sovereign grace has, most surely, made ours in a risen Christ. How few of us really enter into the divine fulness of salvation! How many are groping about in darkness or dim twilight, hardly knowing where they are or whither they are going. They have life. Their very groping proves that; but then it is life in a fog, when it ought to be life in the clear sunlight. The condition of many of God's dear people may be fitly compared to people moving about in one of those thick London fogs. They have no certainty in their movements,

and they are in constant danger of coming in collision with one another or with the various objects which lie in the way.

But does all this darkness and uncertainty, this poverty of apprehension and shallowness in experience, on our part, touch the integrity and fulness of the salvation which is ours in Christ? Not in the smallest degree. There it is for us in all its blessedness and glory; and all we want is faith to take it in and make our own of it. God, in His infinite grace, has sent it to us; and, most assuredly, He means that we should have it and enjoy it, just as He meant that Adam should enjoy the fruits and flowers of paradise, and Israel, the milk and honey of the promised land. God has given us a full salvation, and it is for us to walk in the light, joy, and strength of it, all the day long. Faith appropriates what love provides; and love is never more gratified than when faith most simply appropriates its rich provision. May we ever bear this in mind. May we ever remember that, as God is *glorified* in the salvation which He sends, so He is *gratified* by the faith of those to whom He sends it. We need not imagine that it is in the least according to the mind and heart of God that we should refuse to enjoy the things which He so freely gives to us in Christ. What He gives, He gives "with his whole heart and with his whole soul." (Jer. xxxii. 41.) He gives like Himself, and He loves an artless, childlike faith. If He bestows with His whole heart, He means us to enjoy with a whole heart.

However, gladly as we would expatiate upon this precious branch of our subject, we must close this paper by a brief reference, in the third place, to the question

TO WHOM IS IT SENT?

"The salvation of God is sent *to the Gentiles*." This surely is broad enough for any one who knows himself to be a Gentile. At the first, as we know, salvation was confined to the Jews. They, in the dispensational wisdom of

God, were to have the first offer. The Lord Jesus, in sending out His messengers, in the days of His flesh, expressly told them *not* to go "in the way of the Gentiles." But now all barriers are gone—swept away by the rising tide of God's salvation. We dwell not now upon the fact that Israel is, for the moment, set aside; but upon the fact that God's salvation is sent to us Gentiles, as such. There is no condition, no limitation whatsoever. Every Gentile, from pole to pole, and from the river to the ends of the earth, to whose ears the sweet story is wafted, may possess this priceless treasure of full, free, and everlasting salvation. If a letter or parcel is sent to any one, through the post, he receives it, reads his name on the back, and, without a question, proceeds to open it, and appropriate the contents.

We all understand this. It is simple enough if only we are willing to be simple likewise. God sends salvation to the Gentiles. I am a Gentile; therefore God sends salvation to *me*—yes, to me. How do I know? Because I am a Gentile. It is impossible to refuse the application. Ere I can question the fact that salvation is for me, I must deny the fact that I am a Gentile. I may reject the offer, and have to answer to God for that rejection; but I cannot possibly deny the application. God has sent salvation to the Gentiles, and, if I am a Gentile, He has sent salvation to me, as distinctly and as absolutely as though I were the only Gentile on the face of the earth.

But some will say, "What about election?" We reply, it is a most precious truth of God; but there is not a syllable about it in that glorious charter which now lies open before us. If it had been said, "The salvation of God is sent to the *elect* Gentiles," then, most surely, we should seek to ascertain whether we belong to such a class, and if not, of course there is no salvation for us. But, thanks be to God, nothing of the kind appears. There is no hindrance, no difficulty, no question. We are simply

told that "The salvation of God is sent to the Gentiles." Alas! alas! men refuse it—will not have it—their hearts are full of other things. Nevertheless, there stands the precious casket of God's salvation ready for their acceptance, and if they *will* not have it, their blood shall rest eternally upon their own guilty heads. Let no one shelter himself under the plea of God's hidden purposes and counsels, for no such plea will stand for a moment. Man is not held responsible on the ground of secret decrees, but on the ground of a salvation which is sent to him from the very heart of God, through the precious blood of Christ, and on the authority of the Holy Ghost.

Beloved reader, have you accepted this salvation? Mark what the apostle saith, "The salvation of God is sent to the Gentiles, and they will"—what? "They will *hear* it." Have you heard it? Have you bowed your heart to it? Have you believed in the love that sent it—in the blood that sealed it—in the record that brings it to you? Turn not away from these questions we beseech thee. Time is running on. The year 1869 is closing upon us. Are you saved? If not, why not? If not, what then? Oh! think of thy precious immortal soul! Think of a never ending eternity! Think of the untold joys of heaven—of the unutterable horrors of hell! Why wilt thou die? Why perish eternally when there is actually nothing to hinder thy being, at this moment, the happy possessor of "The salvation of God?"

Lo! to thyself I lift mine eye,
Thy promised aid I claim;
Father of mercies, glorify
The risen Jesu's name.

Salvation in that Name is found,
Cure for my grief and care;
A healing balm for every wound,
All, all I want is there.

A SIXTH LETTER ON EVANGELIZATION.

November, 1869.

DEAREST A——,

I have, in some of the earlier letters of this series, dwelt upon the unspeakable importance of keeping up, with zeal and constancy, a faithful preaching of the gospel —a distinct work of evangelization, carried on in the energy of love to precious souls, and with direct reference to the glory of Christ—a work bearing entirely upon the unconverted, and therefore quite distinct from the work of teaching, lecturing, or exhorting, in the bosom of the assembly, which latter is, I need not say, of equal importance in the mind of our Lord Christ.

My object in referring again to this subject is to call your attention to a point in connection with it respecting which, it seems to me, there is a great want of clearness amongst some of our friends. I question if we are, as a rule, thoroughly clear as to the question of individual responsibility in the work of the gospel. I admit, of course, that the teacher or lecturer is called to exercise his gift, to a very great extent, on the same principle, as the evangelist, that is, on his own personal responsibility to Christ; and that the assembly is in no wise identified with, or responsible for, his individual services, unless indeed he teach unsound doctrine, in which case the assembly is bound to take it up.

But my business is with the work of the evangelist; and I maintain that he is to carry on his work entirely outside of the assembly. His sphere of action is the wide, wide world. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Here is the sphere and here the object of the evangelist—"*All* the world"—"*Every* creature." He may go forth from the bosom of the assembly, and return thither again laden with his golden sheaves; nevertheless, he goes forth in the energy of personal faith in the living God, and on the ground of personal responsibility to

Christ, nor is the assembly identified with, or responsible for, the peculiar *mode* in which he may carry on his work. No doubt, the assembly is called into action when the evangelist introduces the *fruit* of his work in the shape of souls professing to be converted, and desiring to be received into fellowship at the Lord's table. But this is another thing altogether, and must be kept distinct. The evangelist must be left free: this is what I contend for. He must not be tied down to certain rules or regulations, or cramped by special conventionalities. There are many things which a large-hearted evangelist will feel perfectly free to do which might not commend themselves to the spiritual judgment and feelings of some in the assembly; but provided he does not traverse any vital or fundamental principle, such persons have no right to interfere with him.

And be it remembered, dearest A—, that when I use the expression, "spiritual judgment and feelings," I am taking the very highest possible view of the case, and treating the objector with the highest respect. I feel this is but right and proper. Every true man has a right to have his feelings and judgment—not to speak of conscience—treated with all due respect. There are, alas! everywhere, men of narrow mind, who object to everything that does not square with their own notions—men who would fain tie the evangelist down to the exact line of things and mode of acting which, according to their thinking, would suit the assembly of God's people when gathered for worship at the table of the Lord.

All this is a thorough mistake. The evangelist must not listen to it or be influenced by it. He should pursue the even tenor of his way, regardless of all such narrowness and meddling. He may feel perfectly free to adopt a style of speaking and a mode of working which would be entirely out of place in the assembly. Take, for example, the matter of singing hymns. The evangelist may feel perfectly free to use a class of hymns or gospel songs

which would be wholly unsuitable for the assembly. The fact is, he *sings* the gospel for the same object that he *preaches* it, namely, to reach the sinner's heart. He is just as ready to sing "come" as to preach it.

But, it will be said, "Is there not a danger of leading people into a false position by calling upon them to sing hymns?" No doubt; there is danger in this as in everything else. But then the intelligent evangelist does not call upon the unconverted to sing—nay, on the contrary, he warns them against it; and very often it happens that solid work is done by God's Spirit in the conscience, in connection with these words of warning uttered during the singing; for—blessed be His Name!—the Eternal Spirit is wider in His range than we are; His thoughts are not as ours, nor His ways either.

Such, dearest A—, is the judgment which I have had on this subject for many years, though I am not quite sure if it will fully commend itself to your spiritual mind. It strikes me we are in danger of slipping into Christendom's false notion of "establishing a cause," and "organizing a body." Hence it is that the four walls in the which the assembly meets are regarded by many as "a chapel," and the evangelist who happens to preach there is looked upon as "the minister of the chapel."

All this has to be carefully guarded against; but my object in referring to it now is to clear up the point with respect to the gospel preaching. The true evangelist is not the minister of any chapel—or the organ of any congregation—or the representative of any body—or the paid agent of any society. No; he is the ambassador of Christ—the messenger of a God of love—the herald of glad tidings. His heart is filled with love to souls—his lips anointed by the Holy Ghost—his words clothed with heavenly power. Let him alone! Fetter him not by your rules and regulations! Leave him to his work and to his Master! And further, bear in mind that the Church of God can

afford a platform broad enough for all sorts of workmen and every possible style of work, *provided only* that foundation truth be not touched. It is a fatal mistake to seek to reduce every one and every thing to a dead level. Christianity is a living, a divine reality. Christ's servants are sent by Him, and to Him they are responsible. "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth." Romans xiv.

We may depend upon it, dearest A—, these things demand our serious consideration, if we do not want to have the blessed work of evangelization marred in our hands.

I have just one other point that I would refer to before closing my letter, as it has been rather a vexed question in certain places—I allude to what has been termed "the responsibility of the preaching." How many of our friends have been and are harassed about this question. And why? I am persuaded that it is from not understanding the true nature, character, and sphere of the work of evangelization. Hence we have had some persons contending for it that the Sunday evening preaching should be left open. "Open to what?" That is the question. In too many cases it has proved to be "open" to a character of speaking altogether unsuited to many who had come there, or who had been brought by friends, expecting to hear a full, clear, earnest gospel. On such occasions, our friends have been disappointed, and the unconverted perfectly unable to understand the meaning of the service. Surely such things ought not to be; nor would they be if men would only discern the simplest thing possible, namely, the distinction between all meetings in which Christ's servants exercise their ministry on their own personal responsibility, and all meetings which are purely reunions of the assembly, whether for the Lord's supper, for prayer, or for any other purpose whatsoever.

Your deeply affectionate

* * *

SHORT PAPERS ON CHURCH HISTORY;

&c., &c., &c.

THOMAS.—The apostle Thomas was duly called by our Lord to the apostleship, and he is duly mentioned in the various apostolic lists. Of his birthplace or parents we are not informed in scripture; but tradition says he was born at Antioch. All that we know of him with certainty is related by John. But though our knowledge of Thomas be thus limited, there is no *character* among the apostles more distinctly marked than his. In fact, his name has become, both in the Church and in the world, a synonyme for doubting and unbelieving. It is said of a famous artist, when asked to produce a portrait of the apostle Thomas, that he placed a *rule* in his hand for the due measuring of evidence and argument. His mind was thoughtful, meditative, slow to believe. He looked at all the difficulties of a question, and inclined to take the dark side of things. But we will glance for a moment at the portrait which the pen of inspiration has drawn of him in the three following passages.

1. In John xi. his true character distinctly appears. He evidently viewed the proposed journey of our Lord into Judea with the darkest forebodings. "Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow-disciples, Let us also go that we may die with him." In place of believing that Lazarus would be raised from the dead, he feared that both the Lord and His disciples would meet their own death in Judea. He could see nothing arising from such a journey but complete disaster. Nevertheless, he does not seek to hinder the Lord from going, like the other disciples. This too, is characteristic. He had deep affection for the Lord, and such was his devotedness that

though the journey should cost all of them their lives, he was willing to go.

2. The second time referred to, was the Last Supper. (John xiv.) Our Lord had been speaking of going away, and of the home he would prepare for them in heaven; and that He would come again and receive them unto Himself, so that where He was they should be also. "And whither I go ye know," He added, "and the way ye know." But to our apostle's mind, these beautiful promises only awakened dark thoughts of the unseen, unknown future. "Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?" Evidently he was eager to go, and earnest in his enquiries, but he wanted to be sure of the way before taking the first step. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." So long as the eye is fixed on Christ, we never make a false step. It is the single eye that receives the light of heaven, and sheds its radiance over the whole path.

3. The third time was after the resurrection. (John xx.) He was absent when the Lord appeared the first time to the disciples. When they told him that they had seen the Lord, he obstinately refused to believe what they said. From what he says, we may fairly gather, that he had seen the Lord on the cross, and that the overwhelming sight had produced a deep impression on his mind. "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." The following Lord's day, when the disciples were assembled, Jesus appeared, and stood in the midst of them—His own place as the centre of the assembly. He again saluted them in the same words of peace—"Peace be unto you." But He at once turned to Thomas, as if he had been the main object of His appearing that day. "Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither

thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing." The effect on Thomas was immediate, all his doubts were removed, and in true orthodox faith he exclaimed "My Lord and my God." "Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

Some have thought that the faith of Thomas in this instance rises far above all the other disciples, and that nothing higher in testimony ever dropped from apostolic lips. This opinion, though a common one, cannot be founded on the general context. Christ, in reply to Thomas, pronounces those *more* blessed who saw not, and yet believed. It can scarcely be called even *christian* faith, as our Lord evidently hints. Christian faith is believing in Him whom we have not seen—walking by faith, not by sight.

Thomas, we have no doubt, represents the slow, unbelieving mind of the Jews in the last days, who will believe when they see. (Zech. xii.) He was not present at the first gathering of the saints after the resurrection. The reason why we are not told. But who can estimate the blessing that may be lost because of absence from the sanctioned meetings of the saints? He lost the blessed revelations of Christ as to relationship. "My Father, and your Father; my God, and your God." His faith is not connected with the position of sonship. "He has not the communications of the efficacy of the Lord's work," as one has said, "and of the relationship with his Father into which Jesus brings His own, the Church. He has peace, perhaps, but he has missed all the revelation of the Church's position. How many souls—saved souls, even—are there in these two conditions."

The future apostolic labours of Thomas, and the end of his life, are so filled with traditions or legends, that we know nothing certainly. Some say he laboured in India and some in Persia. His martyrdom, it is said, was oc-

casioned by a lance, and is still commemorated by the Latin Church on December 21, by the Greek Church on October 6, and by the Indians on July 1.

JAMES—the son of Alpheus. The identification of the *Jameses*, the *Marys*, and the *Lord's brethren*, has long been a difficult point with critics. This would not be the place even to refer to their theories and arguments. But after looking at different sides of the question, we still believe that our apostle is the James who was a principal man in the Church at Jerusalem—who is the author of "The General Epistle of James"—who is also called the Lord's brother, and surnamed "the just," and "the less," probably because he was low in stature. Identification of persons is extremely difficult in such histories, from the habit, so common among the Jews, of calling near relations, brothers and sisters, and from nearly all of them having two or more names.

In the four lists of the apostles, James holds the same place. He heads the third class. They appear to be in fours. Peter heads the first, Philip the second, and James the third. Very little is known of James until after the resurrection. From what Paul says in 1 Corinthians xv. 7, it is evident that the Lord, before His ascension, honoured James with a personal interview. This was before the day of Pentecost, and may have been for the special encouragement, guidance, and strengthening of the apostle. We will now notice the principal passages, from which we gain our knowledge of James.

In the first chapter of the Acts, we find him with the others, waiting for the promise of the Father, the gift of the Holy Ghost. After this we lose sight of him, until he is visited by Paul (Gal. i. 18, 19), which would be about the year A.D. 39. Now we find him equal with Peter as an apostle. He was at this time the overseer of the Church at Jerusalem, and on a level with the very chiefest apostles.

The place he held in Peter's estimation, appears from the fact, that when he was delivered from prison, he desires that information of his escape may be sent to "James and to the brethren." Acts xii. 17.

In A.D. 50, we find him in the apostolic council, where he seems to deliver the judgment of the assembly. "Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God." (Acts xv.) None of the other apostles speak in this manner. It would appear that he had risen greatly in apostolic position and authority. About the year 51, when Paul paid another visit to Jerusalem, he recognizes James as one of the "pillars" of the Church, and places his name before both Cephas and John. (Gal. ii. 9.) Again, about the year 58, Paul paid a special visit to James, in the presence of all the elders. "And the day following Paul went in with us to James; and all the elders were present." (Acts xxi. 18.) It is easily seen from these few notices, that James was held in the very highest esteem by the other apostles, and that he filled a most important position in the Church at Jerusalem. His attachment to Judaism was deep and earnest, and his advancement in Christianity appears to have been slow and gradual. He was a perfect contrast to Paul; Peter forms a link between them.

The martyrdom of James is placed at about 62, close upon thirty years after Pentecost. The testimony of antiquity is universal, as to his distinguished piety and sanctity. His humility, too, appears great, though he was the Lord's brother, or near relation, he styles himself the servant of Jesus Christ, and does not so much as give himself the title of an apostle. For the reputation of his holy and righteous life, he was universally styled, "James the Just." And as he conformed to Jewish customs with a measure of regularity, he was by no means so offensive in the eyes of his unbelieving countrymen, as the apostle of the Gentiles. But notwithstanding the high opinion that was

entertained of his character, his life was prematurely ended by martyrdom.

For an account of the life, character, and death of James, we are chiefly indebted to Hegesippus, a Christian of Jewish origin, who lived in the middle of the second century. He is generally received as a credible historian. His narrative of the martyrdom of James is given fully, and in his own words, in Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible." We can only give it in substance.

As many of the rulers and people of the Jews became believers in Jesus, through the labours of James, the scribes and pharisees were greatly stirred up against him. The whole of the people, they said, will believe in Christ. Therefore they came together to James, and said, "We pray thee, stop the people, for they have gone astray after Jesus as though he were the Christ. We pray thee to persuade all that come to the passover concerning Jesus. Persuade the people not to go astray about Jesus, for the whole people, and all of us, give heed unto thee. Stand, therefore, on a pinnacle of the temple that thou mayest be visible, and that thy words may be heard by all the people; for all the tribes and even the Gentiles are come together for the passover." But in place of saying what he was told, he proclaimed with a loud voice in the ears of all the people that Jesus was the true Messiah—that he firmly believed in Him, and that Jesus was now in heaven at God's right hand, and that He would come again in power and great glory. Many were convinced through the preaching of James and gave glory to God, crying, "Hosannah to the Son of David."

When the scribes and Pharisees heard this, they said to each other, "We have done wrong in bringing forward such a witness to Jesus; let us go up and throw him down, that the people may be terrified and not believe in him." And they cried out, saying, Even James the Just has gone astray, and they threw him down. But as he was not

killed with the fall, they began to stone him. Then one of them who was a fuller, took the club with which he pressed the clothes, and brought it down on the head of James. Thus the apostle died, and, like the proto-martyr Stephen, he died praying for them in a kneeling posture. It was almost immediately after this that Vespasian commenced the siege of Jerusalem, and the Roman army turned the whole scene into desolation, blood, and ruin.

Simon Zelotes—also called "Simon the Canaanite." He seems to be a different person to Simon, the brother of James. We have no account of him in the gospel history. He is duly named in the Gospels and in the Acts, and then disappears from the sacred page.

It is generally supposed, that before his call to be an apostle, he belonged to a sect among the Jews called "The Zealots." They were conspicuous for their fierce advocacy of the Mosaic ritual. They looked upon themselves as the successors of Phinehas, who, in zeal for the honour of God, slew Zimri and Cozbi. (Num. xxv.) In pretending to follow the zeal of the priest of old, they assumed to themselves the right of putting to death a blasphemer, an adulterer, or any notorious offender, without the ordinary formalities of the law. They maintained that God had made an everlasting covenant with Phinehas, and with his seed after him, "because he was *zealous* for his God, and made atonement for Israel." These high sounding claims and pretensions deceived both rulers and people for a time. Besides, their fury and zeal for the law of Moses, and for the deliverance of the people from the Roman yoke, gave them favour in the eyes of all the nation. But, as must ever be the case under similar circumstances, their zeal soon degenerated into all manner of licentiousness and wild extravagance. They became the pests of every class of society.

Under a pretended zeal for the honour of God, they

charged whom they would with being guilty of blasphemy, or of some other grievous sin, and immediately slew them and seized their property. Josephus tells us that they failed not to accuse some of the "prime nobility," and when they had succeeded in turning everything into confusion, they, meantime, "fished in the troubled waters." He bewails them as the great plagues of the nation. Attempts were made at different times to suppress the society, but it does not appear that they were ever much reduced until, with the unbelieving nation, they were swept away in the fatal siege.

Simon is frequently styled "Simon the Zealot," and is supposed to have belonged to this troublesome faction. There may have been true and sincere men among them, but good and bad alike passed under the odious name of "Zealots." Nothing is certainly known of the future labours of our apostle. Some say that, after travelling for a while in the East, he turned to the West, and penetrated as far as Britain, where he preached, wrought miracles, endured many trials, and at last suffered martyrdom.

JUDAS—the brother of James. This apostle is also called Jude, Thaddeus, and Lebbeus. These different names have different shades of meaning, but the examination of such niceties come not within the range of our "Short Papers." Judas was the son of Alpheus, and one of our Lord's kindred, as we read in Matthew xiii. 55, "Is not his mother called Mary, and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?"

When, or how, he was called to the apostleship we are not informed; and there is scarcely any mention of him in the New Testament, except in the different catalogues of the twelve apostles. His name only occurs once in the gospel narrative, and that is when he asks the following question, "Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto

the world?" (John xiv. 22.) It is quite evident from this question, that he was still entertaining, like his fellow-disciples, the idea of a temporal kingdom, or the manifestation of Christ's power, on the earth, such as the world could perceive. But they understood not yet the dignity of their own Messiah. They were strangers to the greatness of His power, the glory of His Person, and the spirituality of His kingdom. His subjects are delivered, not only from this present evil world, but from the power of Satan, and from the realm of death and the grave. "Who *hath* delivered us from the power of darkness, and *hath* translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." (Col. i. 13.) The answer of Christ to the question of Judas is all-important. He speaks of the blessings of obedience. The truly obedient disciple shall surely know the sweetness of fellowship with the Father and the Son, in the light and power of the Holy Ghost. "It is not here a question of the love of God in sovereign grace to a sinner, but of the Father's dealings with His children. Therefore it is in the path of obedience that the manifestation of the Father's love and the love of Christ are found." Ver. 23—26.

But we must bear in mind, when remarking on the questions or sayings of the apostles, that the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified. The thoughts, feelings, and expectations of the apostles after that event, were altogether changed. Hence we find our apostle, like his brother James, styling himself, "Jude the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James." He neither calls himself an apostle, nor the Lord's brother. This was true humility, and founded on a true sense of the altered relations between them and the exalted Lord. On the day of Pentecost it was proclaimed, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

Nothing is certainly known of the later history of our

apostle. Some say that he first preached in Judea and Galilee, then through Samaria, into Idumea, and to the cities of Arabia. But towards the end of his course, Persia was the field of his labours, and the scene of his martyrdom.

From 1 Corinthians ix. 5, it may be fairly inferred that he was one of the married apostles. "Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?" There is a tradition about two of his grandsons, which is both interesting and apparently true. It has been handed down by Eusebius from Hegesippus, a converted Jew. Domitian the Emperor, having heard that there were some of the line of David, and kindred of Christ, still alive, moved with jealousy, ordered them to be seized and brought to Rome. Two grandsons of Jude were brought before him. They frankly confessed that they were of the line of David, and kindred of Christ. He asked them about their possessions and estates. They told him they had but a few acres of land, out of the fruits of which they paid him tribute and maintained themselves. Their hands were examined, and were found rough and callous with labour. He then enquired of them concerning the kingdom of Christ, and when and where it would come. To this they replied, that it was a heavenly and spiritual, not a temporal kingdom; and that it would not be manifested till the end of the world. The Emperor, being satisfied that they were poor men and harmless, dismissed them unbound, and ceased from his general persecution of the Church. When they returned to Palestine, they were received by the Church with great affection, as being nearly allied to the Lord, and as having nobly confessed His name — His kingdom, power, and glory.

MATTHIAS—the apostle elected to fill the place of the traitor Judas. He was not an apostle of the first election—

immediately called and chosen by the Lord Himself. It is more than probable that he was one of the seventy disciples, and had been a constant attendant upon the Lord Jesus, during the whole course of His ministry. This was a necessary qualification, as declared by Peter, of one who was to be a witness of the resurrection. So far as we know, the name of Matthias occurs in no other place in the New Testament.

According to some ancient traditions, he preached the gospel and suffered martyrdom in Ethiopia; others believe that it was rather in Cappadocia. Thus the great founders of the Church were allowed to pass away from earth to heaven without a reliable pen to chronicle their labours—their last days—their last sayings, or even the resting place of the body. But all are chronicled in heaven, and will be held in everlasting remembrance. How marvellous are the ways of God, and how unlike they are to the ways of men!

The manner of this apostle's election was by lot—an ancient Jewish custom. The lots were put into the urn, Matthias' name was drawn out, and thereby he was the divinely chosen apostle. "And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen. . . . . And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles." The solemn mode of casting lots was regarded as a way of referring the decision to God. "And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the Lord, and the other lot for the scapegoat"—"The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." (Lev. xvi. 8; Prov. xvi. 33.) The apostles, it will be remembered, had not yet received the gift of the Holy Ghost. The lot was never repeated after the day of Pentecost.

A SOLEMN WARNING TO MOTHERS.

A short time ago, as a dear daughter was watching by the bed-side of a dying mother, she observed her unusually restless, and apparently in great suffering. With the tender anxiety of a child, and of one who had nursed her during her illness, she softly said, "Can I turn you, mother dear?" But, oh, what was her answer? With a wild and frantic scream of despair she exclaimed—"*Turn me from hell!*" And thus she died; leaving on the heart of her own child these words of burning agony—"Turn me from hell!"

She had been often warned—often entreated to repent, believe, and turn to the Lord; but, like many others, she found always so much to do as to this present life, that she had no time and no heart for the things of God—of the soul—of heaven—of hell—of eternity. But the day came when she had to leave all behind her and appear before God to answer for the deeds done in the body.

Before laying down this paper, my dear reader, do listen to that most tender, loving, and pathetic complaint—"Ye will not come unto me [said Jesus] that ye might have life." And is this really the cause of the unreasonable—the unaccountable course of so many? "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life!" Come then, oh, come, my fellow sinner, to the blessed Jesus; why should He have to complain that thou wilt not come to Him? In the greatness of His love He died for thee—He died on the cross for thee—He has opened up the way for thy return to God and glory. The precious blood of His perfect sacrifice has been sprinkled on the throne of God; and whosoever comes in the faith of that blood is welcome and blessed according to its value in God's sight. Oh, then, believe in His wondrous love, trust His precious blood, rely on His faithful word, give thy heart to Him —"Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him."

THE DIVINE WARNING.

THERE shall come a night of such wild affright,
As none beside shall know:
When the heaven shall shake, and the wide earth quake
In its last and deepest woe!

What horrors shall roll o'er the Godless soul,
Waked from its death-like sleep;
Of all hope bereft, and to Judgment left,
For ever to wail and weep!

O worldling, give ear, while the saints are near!
Soon must the tie be riven,
And men, side by side, God's hand shall divide,
As far as hell's depths from heaven.

Some husband, whose head was laid on his bed,
Throbbing with mad excess,
Awakes from that dream, by the lightning's gleam,
Alone in his last distress:

For the patient wife, who through each day's life
Watched and wept for his soul,
Is taken away, and no more shall pray—
For the judgment thunders roll!

And that thoughtless fair, who breathed no prayer,
Oft as her husband knelt,
Shall find *he* is fled, and start from her bed
To feel as never she felt!

The children of day are summoned away:
Left are the children of night—
Sealed is their doom, for there's no more room:
Filled are the mansions of light!

What an awful cry will rend the sky,
"Open to us, O Lord!"
O ye sinners, yet, ere the door be shut,
Let that cry *in faith* be heard.

Now poised on the wing, they but stop to sing
O'er the last repenting soul;
In this little while, though never so vile,
CHRIST JESUS can make you whole.

And then, in that night of such wild affright
As none beside shall know,
Ye shall calmly rest on HIS tender breast,
Far off from the world's last woe.

M. B.

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